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SELECTIONS FROM  
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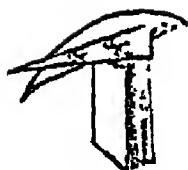
*College Section*



# SELECTIONS FROM LENIN

VOLUME TWO

*The Bolshevik  
Party in  
Action  
1904-1914*



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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The present volume is the second of a series of volumes of selections from the works of Lenin, which will contain the most characteristic and important of his writings and speeches. The series is divided chronologically.

The volumes are intended to illustrate the evolution of Lenin's ideas, and to present his philosophy in a complete form but in a relatively small compass. The task of translating the complete works of Lenin has only just been begun, and must necessarily take a long time to accomplish. But it is felt that his philosophy should be presented as a whole before the full translation is published; and this is the aim of the present series of selections, which cannot, of course, serve as a substitute for the complete works.

One of the difficulties the English or American reader will encounter in reading the works of Lenin is that most of his works are of a controversial character, and that frequent allusions are made to unfamiliar persons, events and arguments.

That the works of Lenin should be mostly of a controversial character is not surprising: they embody the history of the Russian Communist Party; and, as Joseph Stalin said at the Seventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International: "The history of our Party is a history of conflicts and antagonisms within the Party, and of the overcoming of these antagonisms." Lenin was the head and forefront of this fight.

The trend of the discussion may be generally gathered from the text; but in some cases, unless the reader has a knowledge of the conditions prevailing in Russia, and particularly in the revolutionary

movement, at a particular period, he will have difficulty in understanding what the controversy is about. To meet this difficulty these volumes are provided with introductions and explanatory notes, which give the historical and social background of particular discussions and explain the references to particular persons.

A word with regard to the translation. Apart from the difficulty of the Russian idiom the translator has also met with the difficulty of Lenin's style. When he has his opponent's arguments before him, Lenin's brain simply teems with replies; and they come pouring out, hammering home point after point, in a rapid stream of blows. So that no loophole shall be left his opponent, Lenin repeats the argument, from another angle and another. As one idea is being expressed another occurs to him; this must also be used and is inserted in parentheses. To this must be added his fierce ridicule and subtle irony, often expressed in popular Russian proverbs difficult to render into English.

The translator has endeavoured to convey Lenin's ideas in intelligible English, but at the same time he has endeavoured to preserve the style in which Lenin expressed these ideas. The clear, stern logic clothed in a rugged style is the reflection of the clear, stern logic of Lenin's mind.

The serious reader, keen on mastering the teachings of the great leader of the Russian and world revolutionary movement, will have no great difficulty in following the operations of his mind from the text.

The translation of the Russian text in the present volume was made by J. Fineberg. The introductions and explanatory notes were written by P. Pascal for the French edition of this series, and have been slightly adapted for the English edition. The foot-

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notes signed with the initials N. L. are Lenin's own footnotes, contained in the original texts.

Introductory and explanatory matter is throughout set in type a size smaller than that used for the actual text of Lenin; interpolation of such matter is indicated by a line of asterisks (\*).



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THE big strike movement which in July and August, 1903, had spread all over the south of Russia was regarded by all revolutionaries as a prologue, more or less distant, of the revolution. During the year 1904 the Russo-Japanese war, with its defeats and the disorganisation it caused in industry and commerce, once more exposed the utter incapacity and corruption of the autocratic regime and gave a fresh stimulus to the movement.

Discontent was rampant among all classes. The Liberal bourgeoisie boldly and publicly expressed its protest at meetings of bourgeois societies and meetings of municipal bodies.

The assassination of the Minister for Home Affairs von Plehve, on July 15th, 1904, by F. Sazonov, a Social Revolutionary, made even the ruling bureaucracy realise that concessions must be made. The new Minister, Sviatopolk-Mirsky, declared that at home the Government reposed with confidence in public opinion: that was the beginning of the "confidence era." Repressions were mitigated; nevertheless, the opposition movement continued. At the end of October, the Liberation League (*Osvobozhdenye*) decided, in connection with the fortieth anniversary of the judiciary reform, to launch a "banquet campaign" throughout Russia, with after-dinner speeches in which the demand for a constitutional regime was to be made. A congress of urban and rural municipalities, which at first had been authorised and then had been vetoed by the authorities, met after all at St. Petersburg, from 6th to 8th November, and tabled the following "democratic" demands: freedom of conscience, speech, meetings and press, the abolition of castes, equal political rights and popular representation. No mention was made of land for the

peasants or the condition of the workers. The Government, however, remained unmoved.

Peasant revolts were breaking out here and there, at first in connection with the calling up of conscripts to the army. In December tens of thousands of workers went on strike at Baku for demands of a purely political nature, such as freedom of association, the calling of a Constituent Assembly and the end of the war.

In St. Petersburg the Union of Russian Industrial Workers, which, as has been seen (*What is to be Done?*?—Footnotes), had been established at the instigation of the police officer Zubatov with a view to directing the dissatisfaction among the workers into a safe channel, was by the very force of events growing into a revolutionary organisation: its speakers denounced the crimes of the existing regime. From the outset the union encouraged the idea of a strike, and at a joint meeting of the eleven sections of the union, held in connection with the dismissal from the Putilov works of four workers, members of the union, the priest Gapon, its chairman, declared that now was the time to act. On the 3rd of January all work was stopped at the Putilov works, and between January 4th and 6th the strike extended to the principal factories and works in the capital, namely, those employing from two to seven thousand workers each; the chief demand was the eight-hour working day. The small factories struck on the 7th, and by the 8th the strike was general. Gapon was the hero of the day; everyone repeated his words: "Let's go to the Tsar. If he refuses to see us, then he is no Tsar of ours...." The text of the petition to be handed to the Tsar had been read, approved, amended and added to by the masses. On the morning of January 9th processions marched from the working class districts to the centre of the city. Hun-

dreds of thousands of poor people poured out into the streets carrying *ikons* and portraits of the Tsar and marched along in a state of religious ecstasy. But troops were stationed at the main points of the city: the crowds were met with volleys and cavalry charges, which continued from half past one to four o'clock and claimed hundreds of victims. The last shooting occurred on the square right in front of the Winter Palace. In the evening barricades were erected in the Vassili Ostrov district, a printing plant was seized and proclamations were hastily printed and circulated.

That day was fated to be an historic one; it was the first day of the revolution. Faith in the Tsar was gone. All the workers, even the least educated, vowed to fight to the last. The proclamation which the reader will find in Lenin's articles, and which was composed off-hand by the workers, is but one of the many other documents of the same kind bearing witness thereto.

"Bloody Sunday" was no casual episode; it was brought about by profound economic and political causes. Hence the immediate and general echo it had in the provinces. Indeed, no sooner did the news reach a town than the workers spontaneously laid down their tools and came forth with identical demands: the eight-hour day, abolition of fines etc. In Warsaw, fighting between the workers and the troops went on for eight days, barricades were erected, arms shops were ransacked; by the end of this time the whole of the Polish proletariat had risen. At Kovno, work ceased simultaneously in the mills and the railway shops. For a brief period Riga was entirely in the hands of the workers. Conflicts with the police took place at Ekaterinoslav, Kiev, Tiflis, Batum. Even in Saratov, more an agricultural and trade than an industrial centre, the railwaymen joined the movement, into which the

civil servants and students were also drawn. In January the number of strikers in Russia was over 600,000, and in many places, owing to armed resistance offered by the workers to the military, the strikes assumed a character bordering on insurrection.

What was the attitude of Social-Democracy in the face of that vast and elemental workers' movement? In Russia the Social Democrats tried to play an organising role. In St. Petersburg, however, their efforts were belated and abortive, though they were more successful in Poland, in the Baltic provinces and in some of the towns of the interior. The split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks was already sharply felt; in St. Petersburg there were three rival groups, one of which styled itself the "Conciliatory Group." Of the three groups the strongest was the Menshevik group—but even that could not boast of more than some twelve hundred adherents.

The split among the leaders abroad was getting ever more marked. The Bolshevik leaders, who, though ousted from the Central Committee and from the Council of the Party, just as some time before they had been ousted from *Iskra*, were nevertheless strong because they enjoyed the support of numerous committees at home, actively propagated their slogan: the immediate convocation of the Third Party Congress. This group, headed by a "Bureau of the Majority Committees," was in opposition to the official bureaucracy of the Party which opposed the calling of a congress. The group lacked its own organ as opposed to the Menshevik *Iskra* until Lenin and his friends founded the *Vperiod (Forward)*, the first issue of which appeared in Geneva, on December 22nd, 1904. The rupture was thus complete, and no longer withheld from the public.

In the face of these events the disagreement between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks was no longer confined to questions of internal organisation alone, but was extended to the tactics to be pursued.

In October, 1904, the editorial staff of *Iskra* issued a circular to the Party organisations outlining a plan of campaign, the principal idea of which—attributed to Axelrod—was as follows:

The demonstrations that have been organised hitherto have brought together all the democratic elements against the autocratic regime and the war; the time has now come when a superior type of demonstration must be introduced, one that "will bring the revolutionary proletariat and the Liberal bourgeoisie face to face as two independent political forces." The forthcoming sessions of the provincial zemstvos (councils) will serve as a fit occasion for constitutional demands; advantage must be taken of this and under "the pressure of the masses the zemstvos must be induced to demand political liberty and to formulate such demands in a clear, categorical and unambiguous form leaving no room for retreat." At the sessions of the zemstvos must be put forth and made clear "the political demand of the revolutionary proletariat, which the zemstvos must uphold if they are to have the right to speak in the name of the people": this demand is the convening of a "Constituent Assembly elected by universal, secret, equal and direct suffrage." The Liberal bourgeoisie are the enemies of our enemy, and, therefore, to a certain extent are our allies: we must encourage them and induce them to join in the demands which are put forth by the proletariat under Social-Democratic direction. But we must be careful "that we do not, by the use of *intimidation*, *compel* the zemstvos, or any other body representing the bourgeois opposition, by stress of *panic*

to make a formal promise to convey our demands to the Government," for by doing so we should play into the hands of reaction.

How can the desired object be achieved? In localities offering a favourable ground the leaders of the Party, together with the membership, will consider the idea of intervening and demanding a freely elected Constituent Assembly. An "organisational group" is to prepare a draft resolution which must be embodied in a declaration to be handed to the respective zemstvos. An executive committee shall then be elected and propaganda on broad lines shall be carried on among the workers on this basis, with a view to making this proposed action "the real expression of their own aspirations and wishes." This action will be definitely decided upon only if the proposed agitation is successful. In this case the best way to act will be to arrange a labour demonstration as large as possible (this condition is absolutely necessary) in front of the building where the zemstvo is meeting, on the day on which the latter will be discussing the political proposals to be presented to the Government: "part of the demonstration is to enter the hall, and at a given moment, a speaker selected beforehand shall ask the assembly for permission to read the workers' declaration. If such permission is refused, the speaker must loudly protest against the position taken up by an assembly which, claiming to speak in the name of the people, refuses to hear the true representatives of the people." On the other hand, "in order to avoid a panic among the members of the zemstvo by the assembly of several thousands of workers outside the building and of several hundreds in the meeting hall itself—for in their panic they may seek the shameful protection of the police and the Cossacks"—the executive committee "must notify the councillors

beforehand of the proposed demonstration and its real object. In addition, the committee must endeavour to reach an understanding with the left wing of the bourgeois opposition and secure, if not their active support, at least their sympathy."

If this method of demonstrating in front of and within the zemstvo assembly cannot be used without incurring the risk of "compromising our first attempt of this kind," the organisational group shall proceed with other methods, which must first, however, be discussed by the members of the Party. "If the worst comes to the worst, the workers' declaration could be sent to the councillors by mail to their private addresses, or it could be scattered in the form of leaflets in the hall where the sessions are held." We must strive not after outward effect, but rather for "the systematic development of the class consciousness and activity of the proletariat."

Such was the "plan" which Lenin, in a special leaflet written in Geneva in November, 1904, criticises and ridicules as a masterpiece of opportunism.

It is not the Liberal opposition but the Government that the proletariat must strive to influence, argues Lenin. Proletarian demonstrations must be organised not in front of municipal council buildings, but in front of the police stations, the censor's office and the prisons. Our aim is not to scare the bourgeoisie into action, but to rally the forces of labour with a view to insurrection. "The duty of the working class is to extend and consolidate its organisation, to increase tenfold its agitation among the masses, to take advantage of even the slightest weakening of the Government and to propagate the idea of revolt, explaining its necessity by pointing out the fact that all half-measures are doomed to failure from the very outset."

The choice of either of these two tactics definitely depended on the events of January 9th and the ensuing strike wave. However, even before that date, the Mensheviks themselves realised that the municipal campaign was inadequate in view of the rapid strides the movement was making.

The rapid march of events brought out the question which Lenin put in his *What is to be Done?*, namely, the question of preparing for insurrection as a question of practical politics. Martov, in an article published in *Iskra* on March 15th, 1904, had already treated Lenin's idea as utopian and had put forth what, in substance, amounted to the assertion that preparations for insurrection are not made, that, in fact, insurrections are not made. Martynov, in his pamphlet entitled *Two Dictatorships*, which was published on the eve of January 9th, produced further arguments in support of a similar thesis.

The article that follows was published on February 1st, 1905, in the sixth issue of *Vperiod*. While it hints at the "municipal campaign" plan, it deals mainly with the problem which by that time had become urgent, namely, the insurrection and the preparation for it.

## TWO TACTICS<sup>1</sup>

From the very beginning of the mass labour movement in Russia, i.e., approximately during the last ten years, profound disagreements have existed among Social-Democrats over the question of tactics. In the latter half of the 90's these differences gave rise to the tendency known as Economism, which led to the Party being split up into an opportunist wing (the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*) and a revolutionary wing (the old *Iskra*-ists<sup>2</sup>). Russian Social-Democratic opportunism differed from Western European opportunism by some peculiar features. Russian opportunism strikingly reflected the point of view, or perhaps it would be more true to say the absence of any independent point of view, of the intellectual wing of the Party, which became enamoured of the fashionable Bernsteinian phrases<sup>3</sup> and of the direct results and forms of "pure and simple labourism."<sup>4</sup> This led to the wholesale treachery of the legal Marxists, who went over to the camp of Liberalism, and to certain Social-Democrats adopting the notorious "process tactics" theory as a result of which our opportunists were dubbed "khvostists."<sup>5</sup> The latter helplessly dragged at the tail of events, rushed from one extreme to the other,<sup>6</sup> always restricted the scope of the activity of the revolutionary proletariat and broke its confidence in its own strength, while all the time these tactics were

described as encouraging the initiative of the proletariat. This may sound curious, but it is a fact. No one argues so much about the initiative of the workers as the followers of *Rabotcheye Dyelo*, and no one has restricted the activities of the proletariat to such an extent as they did by the advocacy of their tactics. "Less talk about increasing the activities of the masses of the workers," said the class-conscious progressive workers to their zealous but clumsy advisers. "We are much more active than you think, and we can, by street fighting, even support such demands as do not promise palpable results. You cannot increase our activity, because you lack activity yourselves. Do not cringe so much before spontaneity and think more about increasing your own activity, gentlemen!" This is how we were obliged to describe the attitude of the revolutionary workers towards the opportunist intellectuals. (See *What Is To Be Done?* p. 45.)  
 (Not translated in this series.—Ed.)

The two steps backward taken by *Iskra*<sup>10</sup> towards *Rabotcheye Dyelo* revived this attitude. The pages of *Iskra* are again filled with the propaganda of Khvostism, concealed by the same nauseating vows: Lorá; I do believe in and preach the initiative of the proletariat. In the name of the initiative of the proletariat, Axelrod, Martynov, Martov and Lieber (the Bundist) defended at the Congress the right of professors and college boys to join the Party without actually joining one of its organisa-

tions. In the name of the initiative of the proletariat they invented the "organisation process" theory, which justified disruption and lauded intellectual anarchism.<sup>4</sup> In the name of the initiative of the proletariat they invented the no less notorious theory of the "higher type of demonstration" in the form of a *compromise*—between workers' deputations which have passed through the sieve of a thrice repeated election and the zemstvo-ists regarding peaceful demonstrations which shall not rouse fear and panic. In the name of the initiative of the proletariat the idea of armed insurrection was vulgarised, restricted and confused.

We desire to draw the attention of the reader to this question owing to its enormous practical importance. The development of the Labour movement has placed the wiseacres of the new *Iskra* in a ridiculous position. Before their circular letter—in which, for the sake of the "process of the systematic development of class consciousness and proletarian initiative," it was recommended as a high type of demonstration "to distribute workers' declarations to the homes of the workers' deputies and to scatter large numbers of these declarations in the hall of the zemstvo meetings"—managed to be circulated over Russia; before their second letter—in which the astonishing discovery was made that at the present "historical moment the political stage is filled (!) by conflicts between the organised bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy" and that "the objective

sense of every" (Listen to it, listen to it!) "revolutionary movement among the rank and file (!) is exclusively to support the slogans of that one of the two forces (!) which is interested in breaking down the present regime" (the democratic intelligentsia calls itself a "force"!)—managed to reach the class conscious workers and give them the opportunity of reading it and laughing heartily over it, the events of the real struggle of the proletariat immediately swept into the rubbish heap all this political garbage scattered about by the publicists of the new *Iskra*. The proletariat showed that there was a third force (actually it is not the third, but the second in order and the first in fighting ability) which is not only interested in breaking down, but *is prepared to set to work to break down* the autocracy. Since January 9th, the Labour movement has been growing into popular rebellion before our very eyes.

Let us now see how the Social-Democrats, who had preconceived notions about this being a question of tactics, estimated this transition to insurrection and how the workers themselves decided the matter.

This is what we said three years ago concerning insurrection as a slogan, defining the immediate practical tasks :

"Let us picture to ourselves a popular rebellion. Everyone no doubt will now agree that we must think of popular rebellion and prepare ourselves for it. But how shall we prepare? The Central

Committee cannot send out agents to all the districts to make preparations for rebellion. Even if we had a Central Committee it would fail, in view of the conditions at present prevailing in Russia, to achieve anything at all in this way. On the other hand, a network of agents spread out as a means for delivering and distributing a general newspaper,<sup>10</sup> instead of waiting with folded arms for the slogan to revolt, would carry out such regular work as would guarantee the greatest probability of success in the event of a rebellion. Such activity would strengthen our contacts with the greatest masses of the workers and with all who are discontented with the autocracy, contacts which are of the greatest importance for the rebellion. It is work of this nature that will provide the training to enable a proper estimation of the general political situation to be made and, consequently, to enable the appropriate moment for rebellion to be chosen. Such work will train *all* the local organisations to respond simultaneously, in the most energetic, unanimous and appropriate manner, to all the political questions and events now disturbing the whole of Russia. Indeed, actual rebellion is the most energetic, unanimous and appropriate 'reply' of the whole of the people to the Government. Finally, such work will train all revolutionary organisations in all parts of Russia to maintain constant and at the same time most

secret contact with each other, which will in *fact* create Party unity. Without such contacts it is impossible to discuss the plan of revolt or to adopt the necessary preparatory measures, measures which must be kept in the strictest secrecy on the eve of the revolt.

"In a word, the plan for an 'All-Russian political newspaper' does not represent the fruits of the armchair work of doctrinaire and literary persons (as some people thought who did not study it carefully). On the contrary, it was a practical plan *to begin immediately and everywhere to make preparations for the rebellion, while not for a single moment forgetting the everyday immediate questions.*" (*What Is To Be Done?*.) (Not translated in this series.—Ed.)

The words emphasised in italics above provide a clear reply to the question as to how revolutionary Social-Democrats picture to themselves the work of preparing for rebellion. Nevertheless, although this reply was sufficiently clear, the old khvostist tactics could not fail to reveal themselves on this point. Recently,<sup>11</sup> Martynov issued a pamphlet entitled *Two Dictatorships* which is being strongly recommended by the new *Iskra*, (No. 84).<sup>12</sup> The author of this pamphlet is moved to the profoundest indignation of which his Labourist spirit is capable by the fact that Lenin spoke "of preparations, of fixing and bringing about an armed popular insurrec-

tion."<sup>13</sup> The terrible Martynov smites his enemies with the following words: "On the basis of historical experience and the scientific analysis of the dynamics of social forces, international Social-Democracy has always believed that only palace revolutions and pronunciamentos may be *fixed* beforehand and successfully carried out according to a previously prepared plan; it has never regarded these as popular revolutions, *i.e.*, revolutions in social relations, but merely as a re-shuffling of the governing cliques. Social-Democracy has always believed that the date of popular revolutions cannot be artificially *fixed* beforehand, but that they take place of themselves."

After reading this tirade the reader will perhaps say that apparently Martinov is not a serious opponent and should not be taken seriously. We would agree with the reader entirely. We would even say to the reader that there is no more bitter experience on earth than to take the theories and arguments of our new *Iskra*-ists seriously. The unfortunate thing, however, is that this nonsense appears in a leading article in *Iskra* (No. 62).<sup>14</sup> It is still more unfortunate that there are people in the Party, and not a few of them, who stuff their heads with this nonsense. Consequently, we have to discuss things that are not serious in the same way as we had to discuss Rosa Luxemburg's "theory" which revealed the "organisation process."<sup>15</sup> We have to explain to Martynov that insurrection must not be confused

with popular revolution. We have to explain that profound references to revolutions in social relations in the discussion of the practical measures to be taken for the overthrow of the autocracy are worthy only of Kif Makayevitch. The social change began in Russia with the abolition of serfdom, and it is precisely the fact that our political superstructure lags behind the change that has taken place in social relations that makes the collapse of this superstructure inevitable. Moreover, this collapse may be brought about *at one blow*, for "popular revolution" in Russia has already dealt Tsarism a hundred blows. Whether it will be finished off with the hundred and first or the hundred and tenth blow cannot be known. Only opportunist intellectuals who throw the blame for their own philistinism upon the proletariat, can, at the present time when we are discussing practical measures for delivering one of the blows in the second hundred, flaunt their schoolboy knowledge about "changes in social relations." Only opportunists of the new *Iskra* can shout hysterically about the horrible "Jacobin" plan, the central point of which, as we have seen, is to carry on extensive mass agitation with the aid of a political newspaper!

A popular revolution cannot be arranged beforehand, that is true. One cannot but praise Martynov and the author of the leading article in No. 62 of *Iskra* for possessing this knowledge. In the number of *Iskra* mentioned, a loyal comrade in arms or

disciple of Martynov's", in combating the "Utopians" exclaims: "How can our Party think about making preparations for any rebellion?" But if we have really prepared for the popular rebellion, and if that rebellion is possible because of the changes that have been brought about in social relations, then it is quite possible to fix the time for such a rebellion. We will try to make this clear to the new *Iskra*-ists by a simple example. Can we make arrangements to bring about a Labour movement? No, because a Labour movement consists of a thousand separate acts which arise as the result of changes that have taken place in social relations. Can we arrange a strike? Yes, in spite of the fact—just imagine, comrade Martinov, *in spite of the fact* that each strike is the result of the changes that have taken place in social relations. When is it possible to arrange a strike? When the organisation or group which is arranging the strike has influence among the *masses* of the workers affected, and is able accurately to judge the culminating point of the growing discontent and irritation of the masses of the workers. Do you understand it now, comrade Martinov, and you, comrade leader-writer in No. 62 of *Iskra*? If you understand it now, then please take the trouble to compare insurrection with popular revolution. "A popular revolution cannot be arranged beforehand." Insurrection can be arranged beforehand when those who are arranging it have influence among the masses

and are capable of selecting the proper moment.

Fortunately the initiative of the progressive workers has far outstripped the khvostist philosophy of the new *Iskra*. While the latter is worrying over a theory which is alleged to prove that insurrection cannot be arranged beforehand by those who are preparing for it by organising the vanguard of the revolutionary class, events are proving that even those who have not prepared for insurrection may be and sometimes are obliged to decide on insurrection.

Below, for example, is a copy of a manifesto sent to us by some St. Petersburg comrade. This manifesto was set up, printed and more than ten thousand copies of it distributed by the workers themselves, who on January 10th<sup>17</sup> had seized a legal printing plant in St. Petersburg:

### WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

Citizens!

Yesterday you witnessed the brutality of the autocratic Government! You saw blood flowing in the streets. You saw hundreds of fighters in Labour's cause lying dead. You saw death, you heard the groans of wounded women and defenceless children. The blood and brains of the workers were scattered across the streets that had been paved by their own hands. Who ordered the troops to shoot? Who directed the rifles and the bullets towards the breasts of the workers? The Tsar, the

Grand Dukes, the Cabinet Ministers, the Generals and the scoundrels of the Court.

*They are murderers! Death to them! To arms, comrades! Seize the arsenals, stores of arms, and shops where firearms are sold! Storm the prisons, comrades, and release those who have fought for liberty! Smash the gendarme and police stations and all the bureaucratic institutions! We will overthrow the Tsarist Government and establish our own! Long live the revolution! Long live the Constituent Assembly of People's Representatives!*

RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY.

The call to insurrection issued on the initiative of this handful of progressive workers proved unsuccessful.<sup>18</sup> We would not be surprised or discouraged even if several calls to insurrection or attempts to "arrange" insurrection failed. We leave it to the new *Iskra* to howl about the necessity for "changes in social relations" and superciliously to condemn the "Utopianism" of the workers who exclaim: "We will establish our own government!" Only hopeless pedants or muddle-heads would regard this appeal as the central point. What we should note and emphasise is the remarkably bold and practical attempt to solve the problems that confront us at the present time.

The appeal of the Petersburg workers did not and could not succeed as quickly as they desired. This appeal will be repeated more than once, and at-

tempts at insurrection may result in fresh failures, but the very fact that this task has been put forward by the workers themselves is of enormous significance. That which the Labour movement has acquired by realising the practical and urgent nature of this task and by bringing it within the realm of possibility at the first wave of popular unrest, can never again be taken away from the proletariat.

The Social-Democrats issued the slogan to prepare for rebellion three years ago, on the basis of common reasoning. The proletariat, on their own initiative, adopted the same slogan as the results of the lessons taught them by the civil war. There are two kinds of initiative. There is the initiative of the revolutionary proletariat and there is the initiative of the undeveloped proletarian; there is the initiative of the class-conscious Social-Democrat and the initiative of the Zubatovist. There are Social-Democrats at the present time who regard with reverence the second kind of initiative, and who believe that they can evade a reply to the pressing questions of the day by repeating the word "class" an innumerable number of times. Take No. 84 of *Iskra* for example. "Why," asks the leader-writer of this paper, triumphantly, "Why was it the organisation of the workers and not the close organisation of professional revolutionaries that gave an impetus to this avalanche (9th January)?<sup>19</sup> Because the union was a real" (listen to this!) "broad organisation based on the initiative of the masses of the

*workers.*"<sup>20</sup>. If the author of this classic sentence had not been a worshipper of Martynov perhaps he would have understood that the union rendered a service to the movement of the revolutionary proletariat only at the time and to the extent that the movement passed from Zubatovist initiative to Social-Democratic initiative (after which it immediately ceased to exist as a legal organisation).

If the new *Iskra*-ists or the followers of the new *Rabotcheye Dyelo* were not khvostists, they would realise that the 9th of January justified the forecasts of those who said: "In the last resort, the legalisation of the Labour movement will be to Zubatov's advantage and not to ours." (*What Is To Be Done?*) The 9th of January proved again how important was the task formulated in the same book, namely, "To train reapers who can reap the tares of to-day," (i.e., paralyse the present day corruption caused by Zubatovism) "as well as the wheat of to-morrow" (i.e., lead the movement in a revolutionary manner and take a step forward with the aid of legalisation). But the Simple Simons of the new *Iskra* talk about the bountiful harvest of wheat in order to minimise the significance of a strong organisation of revolutionary reapers!

"It will be criminal," continues the leader-writer in the new *Iskra*, "to attack the revolution in the rear."<sup>21</sup> What this sentence means Allah alone knows! What connection this has with the general opportunist features of *Iskra* we will point

out on another occasion. At the present time it will be sufficient to say that the real political significance of this phrase is that the author crawls on his belly before the rearguard of the revolution and contemptuously turns up his nose at the "narrow" and "Jacobin" vanguard of the revolution.

The antagonism between the tactics of khvostism and the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy becomes clearer and clearer as the new *Iskra* zealously pursues its way in the Martynovist spirit. In No. 1 of *Vperiod* (*Forward*), we pointed out that insurrection should attach itself to a spontaneous movement. Consequently we do not for a moment forget the importance of safeguarding the rear, to use a military term. In No. 4 of *Vperiod* we referred to the correct tactics adopted by the members of the St. Petersburg committee who from the very first directed all their efforts towards supporting and developing the revolutionary elements in the spontaneous movement while maintaining a cautious and distrustful attitude towards the shady Zubatov rear of this movement.<sup>22</sup>

We will conclude now with the advice which no doubt we shall have to repeat often to new *Iskra*-ists: Do not minimise the task of the vanguard of the revolution. Do not forget our obligation to support this vanguard by our *organised* initiative. Fewer phrases about developing the initiative of the

workers—the workers reveal an infinite amount of revolutionary initiative which you do not observe! Take care not to corrupt the undeveloped workers by your own khvostism.

*Vperiod No. 6, February 1st, 1906.*

In another article, published in *Iskra* of the 27th of January, 1905, No. 85, on the lessons of the 9th of January, Martov declared that to the innumerable victims of that revolutionary day there ought to be added four ideas which had been, if not killed outright, then at least mortally injured, namely, the idea of "popular absolutism," the idea of police socialism, the "policy of confidence" and, lastly, the "moderate Liberalism" which speculated on the exhaustion of absolutism in its struggle against the external and internal enemy, thus hoping that power in part would painlessly fall into the hands of the zemstvos. Employing the same tactics as previously, the Party would with accelerated speed group around itself increasing numbers of the politically conscious elements of the working class, and after it had rallied in its organisations all the revolutionary elements of the common people "it would be assured of the *political* control of the popular movement, which was imminent and inevitable." Such was the rôle which Social-Democracy must strive to assume and not merely play the part of *technical* leader of the revolution. Even though the various fermenting elements born out of the revolution should deprive Social-Democracy of part of this technical leadership, the demands that those elements will help to make popular among the backward strata of the people will be Social-Democratic demands.

Consequently, "the aim of Social-Democracy at the moment is not so much to 'organise' as to 'unleash' the revolution. Potentially, the revolution exists already in the thoughts and sentiments of the popular masses. An outlet must be found for it in an open movement, it must be transformed into action, and that is entirely

a matter of agitation and organisation, of assuming the *political leadership* of the masses."

This is the way in which the theory of "unleashing the revolution" was formulated, a theory which would have prohibited the Party from officially assuming the leadership of revolutionary acts. Martov himself admitted in his *History of Russian Social-Democracy*, that this theory had its weak points. It was based, as Martov explains, on the idea that the proletariat would not have to act alone in the pending events, but would be backed by large democratic masses which could be rallied under the Social-Democratic banner.

In the same number of *Iskra* (No. 85) Parvus, although an adherent of the Mensheviks, refuted this argument. The peasant mass, he wrote, was amorphous. No really revolutionary tendency could be observed among the urban bourgeoisie. Accordingly, by far the preponderating role in the revolution belonged to the proletariat. That being so, the workers' party was the only force capable of organising the spontaneous movement, not only politically, but technically as well, and of preparing the general attack which, as there were no rivals in the political arena, would inevitably place the reins of power into its hands.

In the article which follows, Lenin is thus in a position to quote Parvus against Martov on the question of the organisation of the revolution. However, in the circumstances that were developing, abstract theories were inadequate. The proletariat demanded not merely debates, but arms. Following the events of the 9th of January it assailed the Social Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats with insistent and angry demands for bombs and guns. And at that very moment *Iskra* was drawing back, apparently doubting that the workers were animated by a genuine desire to make an armed

attack upon the autocracy. As early as January 18th, Lenin declared in *Vperiod*, No. 4, that "to arm the people is one of the urgent tasks of the revolutionary situation. Only the armed people can serve as the true bulwark of liberty.... The immediate arming of the workers and the revolutionary forces in order to abolish the government authorities and institutions is the practical basis on which all revolutionaries can and must unite to strike a common blow."

Issue No. 7 of *Vperiod*, from which the article given below has been taken, appeared on February 8th, 1905.

## SHOULD WE ORGANISE THE REVOLUTION?<sup>\*\*</sup>

This was a very long time ago, more than two years ago. According to Parvus,<sup>21</sup> the well-known German Social-Democrat, disagreements on principle arose in the Russian Party. The primary political task of the proletariat became the struggle against extreme centralism, against the idea of "commanding" the workers from Geneva or some other such place, and against the exaggerated ideas of an organisation of agitators and an organisation of leaders. Such was the profound, firm and unshakable conviction of the Menshevik Parvus, expressed by him in his weekly German sheet *Aus der Weltpolitik (World Politics)* of 30th November, 1903.<sup>22</sup>

It was pointed out to the good Parvus at the time that he was the victim of a piece of scandal-mongering, that at the bottom of the disagreements on principle, to which he referred, there was nothing but a squabble, and that the intellectual change that was to be observed in the new *Iskra* was a change towards opportunism. Parvus stopped writing about this, but his idea about exaggerating the significance of an organisation of leaders was taken up and chewed over and over again by the new *Iskra*-ists.

Fourteen months passed by. The disruptive work of the Mensheviks and the opportunist char-

acter of the tactics they advocated became more and more obvious. January 9th, 1905 revealed the enormous reserve of revolutionary energy possessed by the proletariat as well as all the deficiencies of the Social-Democratic organisation. Parvus came to his senses. He wrote an article in No. 85 of the *Iskra* (entitled: *A Review and Some Perspectives*), which, in fact, represented a complete turn about from the new ideas of the opportunist new *Iskra* to the ideas of the old, revolutionary *Iskra*. "There was a hero," exclaims Parvus in reference to Father Gapon, "but there was no political leader, there was no programme of action, there was no organisation.... The tragic consequences of the lack of organisation made themselves felt.... The masses have become disunited, everything is falling to pieces. There is no binding centre, no guiding programme of action.... The movement collapsed as a consequence of the lack of a binding and guiding organisation." And Parvus issues the slogan to which we referred to No. 6 of *Vperiod*—"Organise the Revolution!"<sup>26</sup> Parvus became convinced by the lessons of the revolution that "under present political conditions we cannot organise the hundreds of thousands." (Reference is made here to the masses ready for revolt). "But we can"—he quite justly repeats the idea long ago written in *What Is To Be Done?*—"set up an organisation which shall serve as the binding centre and rally these hundreds of thousands around itself at the moment of revolution....

We must organise workers' groups which shall have a clearly defined task, namely, to prepare the masses for insurrection, to rally the masses around themselves at the time of the revolt and to raise insurrection on the basis of the slogan of the day."

"At last!" we exclaimed with relief, when we read these old true ideas which had become hidden by the rubbish which the new *Iskra* had piled over them.<sup>27</sup> At last the revolutionary instinct of a worker in a proletarian party has overcome, at least temporarily, the opportunism of *Rabotcheye Dyelo*. At last we hear the voice of a Social-Democrat who does not cower behind the rear of the revolution but who fearlessly points to the task of supporting the vanguard of the revolution.

The new *Iskra*-ists, of course would not agree with Parvus. An editorial note to Parvus's article in *Iskra* states: "We do not share all the views expressed by comrade Parvus." We should say not, indeed! They would hardly share views that simply shatter all the opportunist nonsense they had been uttering for the last eighteen months!

"Organise the revolution!"; but our wise comrade Martynov says that revolution is brought about by a change in social relations, that revolution cannot be made by appointment. Martynov points out this mistake to Parvus and argues that even if Parvus had in mind the organisation of the vanguard of the revolution, it is nevertheless a narrow and pernicious Jacobin idea. Moreover our wise

Martynov leads Trapichkin-Martov on a string, and the latter is capable of making the precepts of his teacher more profound—he is capable of replacing the slogan “Organise the Revolution!” by the slogan “Unleash the Revolution!” (See No. 85.)<sup>28</sup>

Yes, reader, this is precisely the slogan that is issued in the leading article of *Iskra*. It appears that in our days it is sufficient to loosen one's tongue for unfettered chattering in order to be able to write leading articles. Opportunists always stand in need of slogans which, on closer examination, turn out to be nothing more nor less than resonant phrases, nothing more than decadent verbal tricks.

“Organise, and again organise!” insists Parvus, for all the world as if he had become a Bolshevik; but, poor man, he fails to understand that organisation is a *process* (*Iskra*, No. 85 and also all the previous numbers of the new *Iskra*, and particularly the pompous feuilletons written by the pompous Rosa). He does not know, poor man, that according to the whole spirit of dialectical materialism, not only organisation, but also tactics are a process, and he walks around for all the world like a conspirator with a plan of organisation. He, poor Utopian, imagines that we can, at some second or third congress, forsooth, just simply set to work and organise!

And at what Jacobin pillars of Hercules does this Parvus arrive? Just fancy! “Raise insurrection on the basis of the slogan of the day.” This is even worse than the idea of fixing the date for an

insurrection, which has been refuted by our celebrated Martynov. Really, Parvus should learn from Martynov. Parvus should read No. 62 of *Iskra* and from the leading article in that number he will learn what harmful and Utopian ideas about preparing for insurrection were so inopportune spread in our Party in 1902 and 1904. Parvus should read Axelrod's preface to "Worker's" pamphlet,<sup>29</sup> in order to learn about the deep-rooted, malignant and positively destructive scourge (sic) which threatens Social-Democracy as a result of people "placing all their hopes upon the spontaneous rebellion of the most backward, most ignorant and positively barbarous (!) elements of the masses of the people."

Parvus admits that it is impossible at the present time to organise hundreds of thousands, and puts in the forefront the task of "setting up an organisation which shall serve as the binding centre." Is it not enough to make our new *Iskra*-ists squirm for such things to be written in the pages of their organ? The organisation which shall serve as a binding centre is, of course, the organisation of professional revolutionaries, the mere mention of which is enough to give the new *Iskra*-ists fits.

We are extremely grateful to *Iskra* for its leading article which it places side by side with the article written by Parvus.<sup>30</sup> How clearly the vapid, confused, khvostist phrasemongering stands out in comparison with the clear, distinct, direct and bold revolutionary slogans of the old *Iskra*. Is not the

sentence "the policy of confidence is leaving the stage, *never again* to deceive Russia or Europe,"<sup>31</sup> just sheer phrasemongering? As a matter of fact, take up any copy of any European bourgeois newspaper and you will see that this deception is still being carried on with success. "Moderate Russian Liberalism has been utterly vanquished." Liberalism is pretending to be dead from a political desire to conceal itself, and to permit oneself to be deceived by this ruse is just an exhibition of infantile political innocence. As a matter of fact, Liberalism is alive and flourishing. Indeed it is now on the threshold of power, and precisely for this reason it is trying to conceal itself in order the more surely and safely to stretch forth its hand and seize power when the opportune moment arrives. It is precisely for this reason that it is desperately coquetting with the working class. One must be extremely short-sighted indeed to take this coquetry (which is a hundred times more dangerous at this very moment) seriously, and to declare boastfully: "The proletariat, the liberator of the country, the proletariat, the vanguard of the whole nation, in these days has had its *heroic rôle* recognised by the public opinion of the progressive elements of the Liberal-democratic bourgeoisie."<sup>32</sup> Gentlemen of the new *Iskra*! When will you understand that the Liberal bourgeoisie regards the proletariat as the hero *precisely for the reason* that while delivering a blow at Tsarism, it is not yet sufficiently strong, not yet

sufficiently Social-Democratic *to win for itself* the liberty that *it* desires? When will you understand that we must not boast about the bourgeoisie flaunting its Liberalism, but must warn the proletariat against it and expose what lies at the bottom of it? You do not see what underlies this? In that case read the "Declaration Issued by the Manufacturers, Merchants and Stockbrokers" concerning the necessity for a constitution!'" How clearly this declaration speaks of the death of moderate Liberalism, does it not? Loquacious Liberals prattle about the heroism of the proletariat; meanwhile the manufacturers strenuously demand a restricted constitution; this is the situation, dear "leaders!"'"

*Iskra's* arguments on the question of arming are positively unexampled. "The work of arming the proletariat, of systematically building up the organisation which shall guarantee that the people's attack upon the Government shall take place universally and simultaneously," is declared to be a "technical" (!?) matter. And we, of course, are above contemptible technicalities and look deeply into things! "However important they may be [the "technical" tasks], *it is not upon them that our efforts should be concentrated* in our work of preparing the masses for insurrection. . . . All the efforts of the underground organisations would be in vain unless they armed the people with a single indispensable weapon, namely, *a burning desire to attack the autocracy and to arm themselves for that.* We must concentrate our efforts

*upon conducting propaganda among the masses to arm themselves for insurrection."* (The italics in the last two passages are the author's.)<sup>35</sup>

Yes, this is indeed a profound presentation of the question. It is not like that of the narrow and almost Jacobin Parvus. Efforts should be concentrated not upon arming, not upon systematically building up an organisation, but upon arming the people with a burning desire to arm, and moreover, to arm themselves. What a burning sense of shame must overcome the Social-Democrat in reading this philistine piffle, which is simply striving to drag our movement backward! To arm the people with a burning desire to arm is the constant, common and universal task of the Social-Democrats, which can be applied equally to Japan, to England, to Germany and to Italy. Wherever the oppressed are fighting against class exploitation, from first to last, socialist preaching arms the oppressed with a burning desire to arm, and this *desire* already exists when the Labour movement *begins*. The Social-Democrats merely have to make the oppressed conscious of this desire, to make them feel it and to make them recognise the necessity for organisation and systematic action, with all its political consequences.

Mr. Editor of *Iskra*! Look in at any meeting of German workers and observe in the eyes of the workers there assembled the hatred that burns against the police, for example, and what biting sarcasms and clenched fists are directed against them!

What power restrains this burning desire from immediately venting its wrath upon the bourgeoisie and their lackeys who mock the people? The power of organisation and discipline; the power of consciousness, the consciousness that individual assassination is absurd, that the time for serious popular revolutionary struggle has not yet come, that the appropriate political conditions do not yet exist for it. That is why, under such conditions, the socialist will never say to the people: "Arm yourselves"; under such conditions he will always, without fail (otherwise he will not be a socialist but a hollow-sounding prattler) arm them with the burning desire to arm and attack the enemy. The conditions in Russia at the present time are altogether different from these humdrum everyday conditions,<sup>36</sup> and precisely for this reason revolutionary Social-Democrats, who hitherto have never shouted: "To arms!" but have always armed the workers with the burning desire to arm themselves, *now*, all revolutionary Social-Democrats, following the revolutionary initiative of the workers, have issued the slogan: "*To arms!*"<sup>37</sup> And at this very moment when this slogan has at last been issued, *Iskra* comes out with the pronouncement: "We must concentrate our efforts not on arming, but upon the burning desire to arm." Is not this anæmic intellectual logic-chopping? Is this not hopeless muddle-headedness? Are not these people dragging the Party back, away from the immediate tasks of the revolutionary vanguard, in order to contemplate

the rear of the proletariat? This incredible vulgarisation of our tasks is not due to the individual qualities of one or other weak-kneed individual, but to the whole position which they occupy, which has been incomparably formulated in the phrase: organisation process or tactics process. This position inevitably and inexorably condemns a man to fear every definite slogan, to shrink at the mention of "plan," to shrink from any bold revolutionary initiative, to split hairs and chew over old arguments, to fear to go ahead at a time when we Social-Democrats are obviously lagging behind the revolutionary activity of the proletariat. The dead are indeed clutching at the living"; the dead theories of *Rabotcheye Dyevo* lie like a dead hand upon the new *Iskra*.

Listen to *Iskra's* reasoning on the "rôle of Social-Democracy as the political leader, as the vanguard of the class which will liberate the nation." "We cannot achieve this rôle or consolidate it," we are told didactically, "merely by the seizure of the technical organisation or by taking the carrying out of the insurrection entirely into our hands."<sup>11</sup> Just think of it! We cannot achieve the rôle of vanguard if we succeed in taking the carrying out of the insurrection entirely into our hands! And these people have the impudence to talk about the vanguard! *The thing they fear most* is that history shall impose upon them the leading part in the democratic revolution, and they *shrink with horror* at the idea that

they would have to "carry out the insurrection." The idea that is uppermost in their minds, but which they do not yet dare openly to say in the pages of *Iskra*, is that the Social-Democratic organisations *should not* "carry out the insurrection," should not strive to take the revolutionary transition to a democratic republic entirely into their hands. These incorrigible Girondists of socialism are scared by the nightmare of Jacobinism. They do not understand that the more zealously we strive to take the carrying out of the insurrection entirely into our hands, the larger will be the share of this work that will come into our hands, and that the larger this share will be the less will be the influence of anti-proletarian and non-proletarian democracy. They desire above all to be at the tail; they have even invented a special philosophy which teaches that it is their duty to be at the tail. Martynov has already commenced to elucidate this philosophy and no doubt to-morrow he will elucidate it to the full in the pages of *Iskra*.

Follow this argument step by step :

"The class-conscious proletariat, relying on the logic of the spontaneous process of historical development, will utilise for its aims all the elements of organisation, all the elements of ferment, which are created on the eve of revolution."<sup>10</sup>

Excellent! But to utilise *all* elements means precisely to take the leadership *entirely* in our hands. *Iskra* argues against itself and, realising this, hastens to add :

" . . . totally undismayed by the fact that these elements will deprive it of a share of the technical leadership of the revolution and so, willy-nilly, will assist in carrying our demands to the most backward sections of the masses of the people."

Do you understand anything of this, reader? To utilise *all* elements *undismayed* by the fact that they will deprive it of a share of the *leadership*! For the love of God, gentlemen: if *we* really utilised all elements, if indeed *our* demands are transferred to those whom we utilise, then *they do not deprive us* of our leadership but *accept* our leadership. If *all* elements really deprive us of the leadership (and of course not only technical leadership, because it is absurd to draw a distinction between the technical and political aspects of the revolution) it means that we do not utilise them, but that they utilise us.

"We should only be too glad if, following the priest who will popularise our demand for the separation of the Church from the State among the masses, if, following the monarchist labour society which will organise the people's attack on the Winter Palace, if then the Russian revolution will be enriched by a General who will lead the masses of the people in the last fight against the Tsarist troops, or by a Government official who will be the first officially to proclaim the overthrow of the rule of the Tsar."<sup>41</sup>

Yes, we too would be glad if this happens; but we would desire that the feeling of rejoicing over pos-

sible joyful events should not eclipse our sense of logic. What does *the Russian revolution* being enriched by a priest or a General, mean? It means that a priest or a General would become an adherent or leader of the revolution. These novices may or may not be fully conscious adherents of the revolution. If the latter should be the case (and this is the more probable in the case of novices), we have reason not to rejoice but to grieve over their lack of consciousness, and to exert every effort to make them fully conscious. Until we do that, and as long as the masses will follow the lead of these semi-conscious leaders we must say that it is not the Social-Democrats who are utilising all elements, but all elements are utilising Social-Democracy. The quondam priest, General, or Government official who becomes an adherent of the revolution may be full of bourgeois democratic prejudices, and, to the extent that the workers will follow *their lead*, to that extent bourgeois democracy will utilise the workers. Is this clear to you, gentlemen of the new *Iskra*? If it is, then why are you afraid of fully-conscious (i.e., Social-Democratic) adherents of the revolution taking over the leadership? Why are you afraid of a Social-Democratic officer (I purposely select an example similar to yours), and a member of the Social-Democratic organisation, "completely taking over" the functions and duties of your suppositious General on the initiative and the instruction of the Social-Democratic organisation?

We will return to Parvus. He concludes his excellent article with the excellent advice to "throw the disrupters overboard." To eliminate disrupters, as will be seen from the reports in our Party column, is the most passionate and determined slogan of the majority of the Russian Social-Democrats.<sup>42</sup> Precisely, comrade Parvus, we must ruthlessly "throw them overboard," and we must start with those heroes of the Social-Democratic press who have sanctified and continue to sanctify disruption by theories concerning organisation process or organisation tendencies. We must not only talk about this, but *do* it. We must immediately convene a congress of Party workers who desire to organise a Party. We must not confine ourselves to persuasions and advice, but must present a stern and direct ultimatum to all the waverers and doubters: "Choose!" In the very first number of our paper, we presented this ultimatum in the name of the Editorial Board of *Vperiod* and in the name of that mass of Russian Party workers who have been driven to the highest pitch of indignation by these disrupters.<sup>43</sup> Throw them out quickly, comrades, and let us start altogether on organisation work. It is far better to have a hundred revolutionary Social-Democrats who will adopt the organisation plan than a thousand intellectual pedants who prattle about the organisation process.

*Vperiod* No. 7, 8th February, 1905.

**T**O judge the spirit in which the Russian Bolsheviks were preparing for the insurrection and how they resolved the questions discussed in exile it is interesting to read what the Bureau of the Majority Committees wrote in a leaflet published in *Vperiod* of February 23rd, No. 8:

"Parties do not make revolutions, they only prepare for and organise them; they give to the struggle regular and definite forms. Thus, the next wave of general strikes and revolts will presumably start with the same elemental force as the previous one. We must watch for the beginning and then immediately proceed in the same direction, taking care, however, not to mistake a mere chance skirmish for that beginning. . . . The small centres must abstain from taking the initiative. In order to be able to decide whether it is a skirmish . . . or a revolutionary wave . . . we must elucidate the scope and intensity of public feeling . . . etc. After the wave of the political general strike has subsided . . . we must endeavour to take advantage of what fighting spirit remains to secure economic gains.

"The arming of the masses is of the greatest importance, but it presents enormous difficulties. However successful the collection of funds may be, only an insignificant part of what is needed will be obtained by this means. Much more than our direct action would be yielded if the masses took the initiative. We must have arms at the very outset of the insurrection; with this end in view, we must organise the pillaging of armourers and, wherever possible, of arsenals. To achieve this it is necessary first of all to have an armed force, not necessarily a numerous one, and men who could immediately distribute the arms and give instruction in their use; the importance of having contacts

with soldiers and officers, with arsenal workers . . . cannot be over-rated.

"Armed insurrection does not, as a rule, develop according to plan, as the people is not an army, and the revolutionaries, unfortunately, are not captains. Nevertheless, it is possible to be prepared to a certain extent. Each local branch must draw up beforehand a strategical plan of its city and its surroundings, so as to know where resistance should be offered, where barricades should be erected and where they would be unnecessary, where it would be more convenient to cut the means of communication . . . where the arms shops and stores and the quarters of the commanding officers are situated. . . . The release of prisoners from jail, the confiscation of governmental funds and the speedy organisation of courts martial to try spies are desirable from the very outset of the insurrection. . . ."

The authors then proceed to discuss action in the army and such things as the care that should be displayed in street fighting in regard to the inhabitants of all classes ("to avoid all useless destruction of private property. . . .") .

The Third Congress, May, 1905, declared that "to organise the proletariat for the direct struggle against the autocracy by means of insurrection is one of the essential and urgent tasks of the Party" and instructed its organisations, not only to intensify propaganda and agitation, but also energetically to prepare the army of the proletariat, to establish a plan of armed action and to organise groups for this purpose.

The conference of the Mensheviks, which met on the same day, voted in principle for the necessity of "preparing the masses for insurrection," but only by means of agitation, influencing and co-ordinating the spontaneous movements arising here and there, encour-

aging among the people the idea that it must be ready to defend itself with arms and that this defence may grow to be a revolt. Only when all this has been done can the purely military preparations acquire any importance. To whom should power be transferred after the victory of the insurrection, after the autocracy has been overthrown? This problem arose logically before it did so practically, and Martov had tackled it even before the 9th of January. The answer of all the Social-Democrats was: to a provisional government, and this government would prepare the elections for the Constituent Assembly. However, from this point on, opinions differed.

The Mensheviks, as represented by Martynov and Martov reasoned as follows: considering the social composition of the population of Russia and, moreover, in conformity with the programme of Social-Democracy, the revolution, once started, cannot be anything other than a bourgeois revolution, even though the proletariat should play the most active part in it. If, under the plea of the hegemony of the proletariat, Social-Democracy set out to seize power, it might indeed capture it, "not because the proletariat has in reality and morally parted company with the whole of bourgeois society and declared war upon it, but because at the required moment Social-Democracy proved to be the most militant, the ablest and the best trained party." (Martov.) If this happens, Social-Democracy "will have to undertake the radical transformation of society on socialist lines, although this will be premature from the point of view of the conditions prevailing at the time. It will be forced to do so in order to avoid coming into conflict, from the very outset, with the class it represents. The dictatorship of the proletariat will be obliged to take up for solution such urgent problems as unemployment, the exploitation of labour etc. The Party

of the proletariat will not be able to avoid this inevitable development, however much it may wish the contrary or argue against it. We shall have to make a virtue of necessity; having established the dictatorship of the proletariat we shall have to put to practical application the principal items of our maximum programme" (Martynov). But this implies the socialist revolution, and consequently "our analysis of the situation, the analysis given by us, the Russian Social-Democrats, must be wrong" (Martov). This enterprise, the "direct struggle against bourgeois society," is but "a repetition of the Paris Commune."

If, on the other hand, Social-Democracy shared power with the petty bourgeoisie, it would fulfil, not its own programme, that is, the programme of its own class, but that of an alien class, and therefore would be irretrievably ruined and compromised forever. The Bolsheviks holding power would have to shoot down the workers as did the socialist Millerand at Chalon and in the Martinique; instead of remaining Social-Democrats they would turn out to be bourgeois Jacobins and, later, after the Constituent Assembly had been convened, mere "socialistic" Cabinet Ministers, members of bourgeois governments, traitors to the proletariat. To prove this, Martynov quotes Engels' words about Thomas Muenzer, the peasant leader who became dictator at Mulhausen.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, said the Mensheviks, sharing power with the bourgeoisie would be a repetition of "Millerandism," which was condemned by the International Congress as a vulgar kind of "Jaurèsism." Lastly, this idea of Social-Democracy holding the reins of power was, in any case, bound to drive the bourgeoisie towards absolutism, thus strengthening the reaction.

What, then, should be the attitude of Social-Demo-

cacy? It must renounce power and take up a position which would enable it "to free itself from responsibility for a narrow petty bourgeois policy alien to it and to expose its inadequacy theoretically and more especially, practically." In other words, "we must, while extolling our minimum programme, try to hold our position as an extreme opposition party." (Martynov.) To Martov, the only way to prepare for the coming socialist revolution was to "organise the proletariat as a party standing in opposition to the bourgeois democratic State. And the best method of achieving this end is to promote the bourgeois revolution from below, through the pressure of the proletariat on the democracy holding power." These revolutionary opposition tactics are "those which Blanqui recommended to the German proletariat in 1850, at a time when he believed the revolution was breaking out afresh. And Engels recommended these tactics to the Italian proletariat in 1894" (Martynov).

A crushing rejoinder to this reasoning was formulated in the Menshevik's own camp by Parvus and Trotsky, who as early as 1904 had rejected the "zemstvos campaign scheme" as opportunist. Parvus came out with a treatise which he called: *Down with the Tsar! A Workers' Government!* In this and in a preface he wrote to Trotsky's pamphlet, *The Eve of the Ninth of January*, he expounded an absolutely original tactical line. Ever since Bloody Sunday, he wrote, public opinion had abandoned the idea of a constitutional monarchy; the revolution was whipping up Liberal *thought*, which could not be put into practice with the social elements from which they sought their support. Thus, apart from the proletariat, there were only either idealist groups with no social force to lean upon, or those which represent a social force

capable of organising politically, but were not at all interested in the complete victory of the revolution. When the autocracy fell there would be nothing left of the political radicalism of the intellectuals, and this would be not the end, but the starting point of the revolutionary epoch; the proletariat would then seize power and set up a "provisional Social-Democratic government."

In the two articles given below (the first two parts of the first article were published in *Vperiod* No. 13 and the concluding part of the first and the whole of the second article appeared in No. 14), against the above-mentioned opinions Lenin sets forth the Bolshevik viewpoint. Contrary to Martynov and Martov, Lenin affirms the necessity of materialising the victory of the revolution, such materialisation—bearing in mind the social importance of the petty-bourgeois elements—to be expressed in the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants; contrary to Parvus and Trotsky, he insists on the bourgeois character of the actual revolution and the distinction between the maximum and the minimum programmes. These articles are but excerpts from the polemics which continued on this subject for several months.

# *SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT<sup>45</sup>*

## I.

Five years ago the slogan "Down with the Autocracy!" appeared to many Social-Democrats to be inopportune and incomprehensible to the masses of the workers. These Social-Democrats<sup>"</sup> were quite rightly dubbed opportunists. We explained to them again and again that they were lagging behind the movement, that they failed to understand the tasks of the Party as leader of the vanguard and organiser of the class, as the representative of the movement as a whole and of its fundamental and principal aim; that while these aims may, for a time, be veiled by the everyday work, they must never lose their significance as the guiding star of the fighting proletariat.

The time has now come when the flames of revolution have spread over the whole country and when even those that had the least faith have become convinced of the inevitable and imminent overthrow of the autocracy.<sup>"</sup> By the irony of history, Social-Democrats still have to deal with reactionary and opportunist attempts to drag the movement back, to restrict its tasks and to tone down its slogans. To combat those who make these attempts becomes the task of the day and (notwithstanding the opinion of many of those who

are watching the controversy in our Party<sup>48</sup>) acquires enormous *practical* significance. The closer we come to the realisation of our immediate political tasks, the more necessary does it become clearly to understand these tasks, and the more harmful become all ambiguity, half expressions and half thoughts on this question.

The failure to carry ideas to their logical conclusion is quite a common complaint among the Social-Democrats of the new *Iskra* or (what is almost the same) the camp of the *Rabotcheye Dyevo*<sup>49</sup>. "Down with the autocracy!" Everybody agrees with this; not only Social-Democrats, but all democrats, even all Liberals, if we are to believe their declarations. But what does it mean? How is the present Government to be overthrown? Who is to convene the Constituent Assembly, which even the followers of *Osvobozhdenye* support in their slogan (see No. 67 of that paper)<sup>50</sup>, which includes also universal suffrage? In what way can it be guaranteed that the elections to this Assembly will be free and will express the interest of the whole people?

Those who do not thoroughly take these questions into consideration fail to understand the significance of the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" And these questions inevitably bring us to the question of the provisional revolutionary government. It is not difficult to understand that really free popular elections to the Constituent

Assembly, completely guaranteeing real, universal, equal, direct and secret voting, are not only improbable, but absolutely impossible under the autocracy. And if we advance the practical demand for the immediate overthrow of the autocratic Government in all seriousness, then we must be absolutely clear in our minds as to *what other government* we want to take the place of the one that will be overthrown, or, in other words, what should be the attitude of the Social-Democrats towards the Provisional Government.

On this question also the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy, *i.e.*, the new *Iskra*-ists, are strenuously dragging the Party back, as the followers of *Rabotcheye Dyeło* five years ago dragged the Party back on the question of the political struggle in general. Their reactionary views on this point were most clearly developed in Martynov's pamphlet *Two Dictatorships* which *Iskra* (No. 84) strongly recommended, and to which we have already drawn the reader's attention.<sup>51</sup>

At the very beginning of his pamphlet, Martynov tried to scare us by the following horrible prospect: "If the strong organisation of revolutionary Social-Democrats could 'arrange and carry out a popular armed rising' against the autocracy, of which Lenin dreamed, then is it not obvious that immediately after the revolution, the people would appoint this particular Party to the position of the Provisional Government? And is it not obvious that the people

would place the immediate fate of the revolution in the hands of precisely this party and no other?"

This is incredible, but it is a fact. The future historian of Russian Social-Democracy will have to place on record the astonishing fact that at the very beginning of the Russian revolution, the Social-Democratic Girondists tried to *scare* the revolutionary proletariat with a prospect like this. The whole content of Martynov's pamphlet (as well as a whole series of articles and separate passages in articles published in *Iskra*) simply amounts to lurid descriptions of the "horrors" of this perspective. The leading theoretician of the new *Iskra* is tortured by nightmares of the seizure of power, Jacobinism, Bakuninism, Tkatchovism<sup>52</sup> and other bogeys with which various revolutionary nursemaids frighten political infants. As is to be expected, these are accompanied by "quotations" from Marx and Engels. Poor Marx and Engels! How they are misused by these quotations from their works! You will remember that the postulate "every class struggle is a political struggle" was used to *justify* the narrowness and backwardness of *our* political tasks and methods of political education and struggle? Now Engels is dragged forth as a witness on behalf of khvostism. In his *Peasant War in Germany* he wrote: "The worst thing that can confront the leader of an extreme party is the necessity of taking power at a time when the movement has not yet sufficiently ripened to enable the

class which it represents to rule and to carry out the measures which would make its rule secure." It is sufficient to read this beginning of the long quotation Martynov makes from Engels in order to become convinced how much this khvostist distorts the author's ideas. Engels talks about *power guaranteeing the rule of the class*. Surely that is clear enough? Applied to the proletariat it means *guaranteeing the rule of the proletariat, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat* for the purpose of bringing about the social revolution. Martynov fails to understand this and confuses the provisional revolutionary government, in the period of the overthrow of autocracy, with guaranteeing the domination of the proletariat in the period of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; he confuses the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry with the socialist dictatorship of the working class. Reading on further the passage quoted, Engels' idea becomes more and more clear. The leader of an extremist party, he says, would have to "defend the interests of an alien class and alienate himself from his own class by *phrases, promises and assurances that the interests of the other class are also its interests.* He who falls into this *false position* is doomed for ever."

The passages emphasised clearly show that Engels uttered a warning against falling into the false position that would result from the leader failing to understand the real interests of his own class and

the real class character of the revolution. In order to make this clearer to our profound Martynov, we will try to illustrate this by a simple example. When the *Narodnaya Volya* people, in trying to represent the interests of "Labour," assured themselves and everybody else that ninety-nine per cent. of the peasant representatives in the future Russian Constituent Assembly will be socialists, they fell into a false position which inevitably would have led them to irrevocable political doom, for these "promises and assurances" did not correspond with actual conditions. As a matter of fact they would represent the interests of the bourgeois democracy, "the interests of the other class." Are you beginning to understand anything now, most worthy Martynov? When the Social Revolutionaries describe the agrarian reforms that must inevitably come about in Russia as "socialisation," as "transfer of the land to the people," as the beginning of "equal right to the use of the land," they place themselves in a false position which must inevitably lead them to irrevocable political doom, for, as a matter of fact, the reforms which they are trying to obtain will guarantee the domination of the *other class*, the peasant bourgeoisie; and the more rapidly the revolution develops the more quickly will reality refute their phrases, promises and assurances. Don't you understand yet, most worthy Martynov? Do you not yet understand that the *quintessence* of Engels' idea is to point out how fatal is a *lack of*

*understanding* of the real historical tasks of the revolution? Do you not understand that Engels' words can be applied to the *Narodnaya Volya* people and to the Social Revolutionaries?"

## II.

Engels points to the danger of the leaders of the proletariat failing to understand the non-proletarian character of the revolution, and, from this, the wise Martynov draws the conclusion that it is dangerous for leaders of the proletariat, who by their programme and tactics had put a fence between themselves and revolutionary democracy (*i.e.*, by the whole of their propaganda and agitation), to play a leading part in establishing the democratic republic. Engels sees the danger of the leaders confusing the imaginary socialist substance of the revolution with its real democratic substance, and the sagacious Martynov draws from this the conclusion that it would be dangerous for the proletariat, jointly with the peasantry, to set up a conscious dictatorship in establishing the democratic republic as the final form of bourgeois domination and the best form of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Engels sees the danger of falling into a false position as a result of saying one thing and doing another, as a result of promising the rule of one class and in fact guaranteeing the rule of another. Engels says that to fall into this false position means irrevocable doom; and from this Martynov draws the conclusion that

doom awaits us, because the bourgeois adherents of democracy will not permit the proletariat and the peasantry to establish and maintain a real democratic republic. The wise Martinov cannot for the life of him understand that such a doom, the doom of the leader of the proletariat, the doom of thousands of proletarians in the fight for a real democratic republic, being a physical doom, is not political doom, but on the contrary a great political gain for the proletariat, a great accomplishment of its hegemony in the fight for liberty. Engels speaks of the political doom of the one who unconsciously wanders from his class path into the path of an alien class, and Martynov, reverently quoting Engels, talks about the doom of those who proceed further and further along the true class road.

The difference between the point of view of revolutionary Social-Democracy and that of khvostism stands out in striking relief. Martynov, in the new *Iskra*, shrinks from the tasks imposed upon the proletariat in conjunction with the peasantry by the radical democratic revolution. He shrinks from the Social-Democratic leadership of this revolution and thus surrenders, if unconsciously, the interests of the proletariat to the bourgeois democracy. From the correct view of Marx that we must set to work to organise, not a government but an opposition party of the future,<sup>51</sup> Martynov draws the conclusion that we must serve as the khvostist opposition to the present revolution. All Martynov's political

wisdom reduces itself to this. The following is an example of Martynov's reasoning and we strongly recommend the reader to ponder over it. Martynov says:

"The proletariat cannot obtain political power in the State, either whole or in part, until it has brought about the social revolution. This is the indisputable postulate which separates us from opportunist Jaurèsism. . . ." (Martinov, p. 58) and which, we will add, indisputably proves the incapacity of the worthy Martinov to understand anything at all. "To confuse the participation of the proletariat in a government which is resisting the social revolution with the participation of the proletariat in the democratic revolution means to fail hopelessly to understand what the whole argument is about. It is the same as confusing Millerand's entry into the government of the assassin Gallifet with Varlin's entry into the Commune which defended and saved the republic.""

But read further, and see how our author gets himself tangled up. ". . . That being the case, it is evident that the forthcoming revolution cannot assume any political forms *against the will of the whole bourgeoisie*, for the latter will be the master of to-morrow. . . ." (Martynov's italics.)

In the first place why does Martinov speak only of political forms, when in the previous sentence he spoke about the rule of the proletariat in general

right up to the social revolution? Why does not the author speak about the assumption of economic forms? Because, unconsciously, he skipped from the social revolution to the democratic revolution. That being the case, then secondly, the author is absolutely wrong to speak *tout court* of the "will of the whole bourgeoisie," because a distinguishing feature of the democratic revolution is the existence of diversified wills of different sections of the bourgeoisie which have only just emancipated themselves from absolutism. To speak of a democratic revolution and to confine oneself merely to making a bare and simple contrast between the "proletariat" and the "bourgeoisie" reveals an absolute lack of comprehension, because that revolution represents a period in the development of society when the mass of society consists of a class which stands between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, namely, the large petty bourgeois class of peasants. Precisely for the reason that the democratic revolution has not been completed, this large class has more interests in common with the proletariat in the task of realising political forms than with the "bourgeoisie," in the real and narrow sense of the term. One of the principal reasons why Martynov has got himself so tangled up is that he failed to understand this simple thing.

We will read on further: ". . . That being the case, then by simply scaring the majority of the bourgeois elements the revolutionary struggle of the

proletariat can lead only to one result—the restoration of absolutism in its original form. The proletariat, of course, will not be restrained by this possible result, it will not refrain from scaring the bourgeoisie, even if at the worst, things will tend towards the revival and strengthening of the decaying autocratic rule by imaginary constitutional concessions. Of course, in entering into the struggle the proletariat does not have this 'worst' outcome in mind."

Do you understand anything of this, reader? The proletariat will not refrain from scaring the bourgeoisie, and this will lead to the restoration of absolutism in the event of the danger of imaginary constitutional concessions arising! This would be the same as if I said that I am menaced with the plagues of Egypt in the form of being obliged to carry on a conversation with Martynov for a whole day; therefore, at the worst, I resort to the method of scaring, which may result only in my having to carry on a conversation with both Martynov and Martov for two days. My dear sir, what utter nonsense!

The idea which was running through Martynov's mind when he wrote the nonsense we have quoted above is as follows: if in the period of democratic revolution the proletariat should scare the bourgeoisie by threats of bringing about a social revolution, it will lead to reaction and diminish the democratic gains. And that is all. No one has any idea, of course, of restoring absolutism in its original

form or, at the worst, of resorting to the worst kind of stupidity. It is all a matter of recognising the difference that exists between the democratic revolution and the social revolution, which Martynov forgets, and of recognising the existence of that numerous peasant and petty bourgeois population, which is capable of supporting the democratic revolution<sup>56</sup> but is not capable, at the present time, of supporting the social revolution.

Listen to what our wise Martynov has to say further: ".... Evidently the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie must, on the eve of the bourgeois revolution, differ in certain respects from the final stages of that struggle on the eve of the social revolution." ... Yes, that is obvious, and if Martynov had only pondered over this difference he would hardly have written this nonsense or, indeed, the whole pamphlet.

".... The fight to influence the progress and outcome of the bourgeois revolution may find expression only in the revolutionary pressure that the proletariat will exercise upon the Liberal and Radical bourgeoisie, in the compulsion that the democratic rank and file of society will put upon the upper class to make them consent to carry the bourgeois revolution to its logical conclusion. It will find expression in the dilemma in which the proletariat will place the bourgeoisie at every opportunity: either back into the clutches of

absolutism in which they were crushed, or forward with the people."

This tirade is the central point in Martynov's pamphlet. It is its quintessence and its fundamental idea. What is this wise idea? Just see: What is the "rank and file of society," what is the "people," whom our sage has at last called to mind? It is that numerous, petty bourgeois, urban and peasant population which is quite capable of coming out as a revolutionary democratic factor. And what is this pressure of the proletariat and peasantry upon the upper class of society, what is this advance of the proletariat in conjunction with the whole people, irrespective of what the upper class of society does? It is that revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry against which our khvostist is fighting. He is afraid of thinking out his ideas to their logical conclusion. He is afraid to call a spade a spade. Hence, he employs words the meaning of which he does not understand; he awkwardly repeats slogans oddly distorted, the real meaning of which slips from him.<sup>57</sup> Only a khvostist could be capable of writing such a literary curiosity at the most interesting part of his summary of his pamphlet. Only Martynov could express the idea of the revolutionary pressure of the proletariat and the "people" upon the upper class of society without a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Martynov wants the proletariat to threaten the upper

class of society that it will go forward with the people, but at the same time wants the proletariat to decide, in conjunction with its new *Iskra* leaders not to advance along the democratic path, because that is the path of revolutionary democratic dictatorship. . . Martynov wants the proletariat to exercise pressure upon the will of the upper classes by exposing its own lack of will. Martynov wants the proletariat to induce the upper classes to "consent" to lead the bourgeois revolution to its logical democratic republican conclusion by exposing its own fear to undertake, in conjunction with the people, this task of leading the revolution to its conclusion, to take power and establish the democratic dictatorship. Martynov wants the proletariat to be the vanguard in the democratic revolution and therefore the wise Martynov tries to frighten the proletariat by the prospect of its having to take part in the provisional revolutionary government in the event of the insurrection being successful.

Reactionary khvostism could not go further. We should all make our profound obeisances to the pious Martynov for having carried out the khvostist tendencies of the new *Iskra* to their logical conclusion and brought them out in striking relief upon one of the most burning and fundamental political questions of the day."

### III.

What is the cause of Martynov's confusion? The cause is that he mixes up democratic revolution

with social revolution, that he forgets the rôle of the class which stands between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (the petty bourgeois mass of urban and rural poor, the semi-proletarians, small farm owners), that he fails to understand the true significance of our minimum programme. Martynov has heard somewhere that it is not respectable for a socialist to belong to a bourgeois government (when the proletariat is fighting for the social revolution) and he jumps to the conclusion that a socialist must not participate, jointly with the revolutionary bourgeois democracy, in a democratic revolution and in the dictatorship which is essential for the complete accomplishment of such a revolution. Martynov read our minimum programme, but failed to observe that the strict distinction that is drawn between the reforms which it is possible to carry out within the framework of bourgeois society and socialist reforms has not only a literary significance but is of vital practical importance; he failed to observe that in a revolutionary period the programme must be immediately tested and applied. It did not occur to Martynov that to reject the revolutionary democratic dictatorship in the period of the fall of the autocracy is tantamount to rejecting the fulfilment of our minimum programme. Indeed, recall the various economic and political reforms contained in that programme. The demand for a republic, for the armed nation, separation of the Church from the State, complete

democratic liberty, important economic reforms. Is it not clear that it is impossible to bring these reforms about unless we have a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the lower classes? Is it not clear that reference is made here not to the proletariat alone, as distinct from the bourgeoisie, but to the "lower classes," who are the active driving force of every democratic revolution? These classes are the proletariat *plus* the tens of millions of urban and rural poor who live the lives of petty bourgeoisie. Undoubtedly, a considerable number of the representatives of these masses belong to the bourgeoisie, but there is still less doubt that it is to the interest of these masses that democracy should be introduced to the utmost and that the more enlightenment there is amongst these masses, the more inevitably will they fight for the complete realisation of democracy. A Social-Democrat, of course, will never forget the dual political and economic nature of the petty bourgeois urban and rural masses; he will never forget the necessity for separate and independent class organisation of the proletariat which fights for socialism. But also he will not forget that these masses possess "not only a past but a future, not only prejudices but judgment," which impels them forward towards the revolutionary democratic dictatorship; he will not forget that enlightenment is not obtained from books alone, and not so much from books even, as from the very progress of the revolution.

tion, which opens the eyes of the people and serves as a school of politics."<sup>59</sup> Consequently, under such conditions, the theory which abandons the idea of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship cannot be described as anything other than the philosophical justification of political conservatism.

A revolutionary Social-Democrat will reject such a theory with contempt. On the eve of the revolution he will point out not only the worst outcome of it. No! He will point out also the possibilities of a better outcome. He will dream—he must dream if he is not a hopeless philistine—of how after the vast experience of Europe, after the unparalleled sweep of energy of the working class in Russia, we will succeed, as never before, in kindling a beacon that will light up the path of the ignorant and oppressed masses. Because we stand on the shoulders of a whole number of revolutionary generations of Europe we will carry out all the democratic reforms, the whole of our minimum programme, to a degree hitherto unachieved. Due to our efforts, the Russian revolution will become a movement not only of a few months' duration, but a movement lasting many years, so that it will lead, not merely to a few paltry concessions on the part of ruling sovereigns, but to the complete overthrow of these rulers. And if we succeed in doing that—then . . . the revolutionary conflagration will spread all over Europe; the European workers languishing under bourgeois reaction will rise and

in their turn show us "how to do it"; then the revolutionary wave in Europe will sweep back into Russia and convert the epoch of a few revolutionary years into an epoch of several revolutionary decades" and then . . . but we shall have plenty of time to say what we shall do then, not from confoundedly distant Geneva, but at meetings of thousands of workers gathered in the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg and at free assemblies of Russian *moujiks*.

#### IV.

Such dreams, of course, are alien to the philistines of the new *Iskra* and their master mind, our good Martynov. They fear the complete realisation of our minimum programme by means of the revolutionary dictatorship of the common people. They are concerned about their own class consciousness, they fear to lose the stereotyped tenets they have learned by rote (but which they have never thought out). They fear that they will be unable to distinguish the correct and bold steps of democratic reforms from the adventurist leaps in the dark of non-class Narodist socialism or anarchism. Their philistine souls quite rightly warn them that when things are moving forward very rapidly it is more difficult to find the proper path and rapidly to solve new and complex problems than in everyday, petty routine work. Therefore, they instinctively mumble to themselves: "Save us! Save us! May the cup of revolutionary democratic dictatorship

pass us by! O, that we may not be lost! O Lord, do it in 'slow steps and awkward zigzags!' . . . ."

It is not surprising therefore that Parvus, who magnanimously supported the new *Iskra*-ists when it was principally a matter of co-opting old and worthy members, at last began to feel very uncomfortable in this company. It is not surprising that he more and more began to feel *tedium vitae*, weary of life in their company. Finally he was driven to revolt. He not only defended the slogan "Organise revolution!" which frightened the new *Iskra* to death, but he wrote manifestoes which *Iskra* published in the form of special leaflets, but from which, owing to its horror of Jacobinism, it omitted all mention of the Social-Democratic Labour Party.<sup>11</sup> No! Waking up from the nightmare of the profound Axelrod (or is it Luxemburg?) theory of the organisation process, Parvus at last managed to go forward instead of ambling backward like a crab. He declined to perform the Sisyphus task of making endless corrections to the Martynov and Martov stupidities. He came out openly (unfortunately in conjunction with Trotsky<sup>12</sup>) in defence of the idea of revolutionary democratic dictatorship, in defence of the obligation of Social-Democrats to participate in the provisional revolutionary government after the overthrow of the autocracy. Parvus is a thousand times right when he says that Social-Democracy must not fear bold steps forward, must not fear to rain blows upon

the enemy, side by side with the revolutionary bourgeoisie democracy, on the absolute condition, however, (we take the opportunity to point out) that we do not merge our organisations; march separately, but fight together; no concealing of differences of interests; watch your ally as you would an enemy, etc.

But the warmer our sympathy for the slogans issued by this revolutionary Social-Democrat who has turned his back on khvostism, the more are we surprised at certain false notes that are discernable in his utterances. It is not in a carping spirit that we mention these minor false notes, we do so because from him who gives promise of much, much is demanded. It would be more dangerous than ever at the present time if the true position adopted by Parvus were compromised by his own carelessness. We think that the following sentences in Parvus' preface to Trotsky's pamphlet,<sup>63</sup> must have crept in owing to carelessness. The passage is as follows: "If we desire to separate the revolutionary proletariat from other political tendencies we must be able to stand intellectually at the head of the revolutionary movement" (that is true), "to be more revolutionary than all the others";—that is not true, that is to say, it is not true if this is taken in the broad sense in which it is expressed by Parvus. It is not true from the point of view of the reader who will take this preface as something self-contained and independent of Martynov and other

*Iskra*-ists whom Parvus has not mentioned. If, however, we examine this postulate dialectically, i.e., relatively, concretely, and from all its aspects, without copying those literary pirates who for some years have been snatching separate sentences from complete works many years after they have been written and distorting their meaning, it will become clear that Parvus directed this passage against khvostism, and to that extent it is correct (see particularly the subsequent words of Parvus: "If we lag behind revolutionary development," etc.). But the reader cannot have only khvostists in mind. There are other dangerous friends of the revolution in the revolutionary camp besides the khvostists; there are also the Social Revolutionaries,<sup>64</sup> there are people who have been swept in by the tide of events who are helpless in the face of revolutionary phrases, like Nadezhdin,<sup>65</sup> or like those in whom instinct takes the place of revolutionary philosophy (like Gapon). Parvus forgot about these; he forgot about them because he did not develop his ideas freely, his mind was bound by pleasant recollections of the Martynovism against which he warns the reader. Parvus' statement is not sufficiently concrete because he ignores all the various revolutionary tendencies that exist in Russia which inevitably arise in the epoch of democratic revolution and which naturally reflect the class dismemberment of society in such an epoch. Vague and sometimes even reactionary socialist ideas concealed

behind revolutionary phrases quite naturally, at such a time, clothe the revolutionary democratic programme (recall the Social Revolutionaries and Nadezhdin, who, in leaving the Social Revolutionaries to join the new *Iskra*, only altered his label). Under such conditions socialists would never put forward the slogan: "To be more revolutionary than all the others." We have not the slightest intention of chasing after the revolutionariness of a democrat detached from his class basis, flaunting phrases and snatching at cheap and (particularly in the agrarian sphere) catchy slogans. On the contrary, we will be extremely critical of such revolutionariness, expose the real meaning of its words, the real content of the great events it idealises, soberly take into calculation all classes and the various shades within the classes in the thick of the revolution.

Similarly incorrect, and for the same reason, is Parvus's postulate that "the revolutionary provisional government of Russia will be a government of labour democracy"; that "if Social-Democracy be at the head of the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat then that government will be a Social-Democratic Government"; that the Social-Democratic provisional government "will be an integral government with a Social-Democratic majority." This cannot be, unless we mean casual, passing episodes; it cannot take place in connection with a revolutionary dictatorship that will be at all

durable and capable of leaving some trace in history. This cannot be, because only a revolutionary dictatorship relying upon the overwhelming majority can be at all durable (of course, relatively and not absolutely). At the present time the Russian proletariat represents a minority of the population of Russia."<sup>6</sup> It can become the great overwhelming majority only if it combines with the mass of semi-proletarians and small farm owners, *i.e.*, with the mass of the petty bourgeois, urban and rural poor. Such a social basis, possible and desirable for the revolutionary democratic dictatorship, will, of course, find its reflection in the composition of the revolutionary government and will make the participation or even the predominance of the most diversified representatives of revolutionary democracy inevitable in it. It would be extremely harmful to harbour any illusions on this score. If hollow-sounding Trotsky now writes (unfortunately in conjunction with Parvus) that "Father Gapon could appear only once," that "there is no place for a second Gapon," he does so simply because he is hollow-sounding."<sup>7</sup> If there was no place in Russia for a second Gapon then there is no place for a really "great" democratic revolution that will indeed be carried to the very end. In order to become great, in order to recall 1789-1793 and not 1848-1850, and in order to excel the events of those years, it must raise the vast masses to active life and heroic efforts, to "fundamental historic creative-

ness," it must raise them out of frightful ignorance, unparalleled oppression, incredible barbarity and unenlightened dullness. It is already raising them, it will finally raise them, and this is being facilitated by the convulsive resistance of the Government itself. But these masses, of course, possess no thought-out political consciousness, or Social-Democratic consciousness, nor do their numerous home-made, popular and even *moujik* leaders. They cannot become Social-Democrats without first passing through a number of revolutionary experiences, not only because of their ignorance (we repeat, revolution enlightens with incredible rapidity), but because their class position is not proletarian, because the objective logic of historical development has confronted them, not with a social revolution, but with a democratic revolution.

In this revolution the revolutionary proletariat will participate with all energy, rejecting the miserable khvostism of some and the revolutionary phrasemongering of others; it will introduce class definiteness and class consciousness into the giddy whirlpool of events and proceed undeviatingly and boldly forward, undaunted by the revolutionary democratic dictatorship, indeed passionately desiring it, fighting for a republic and complete republican liberties, for important economic reforms in order to create for itself a real arena, worthy of the 20th century, for the fight for socialism.

*Vperiod*, No. 13, March 23rd, 1905, and No. 14, March 30th, 1905.

## *REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND OF THE PEASANTRY"*

The question of whether Social-Democrats should join the provisional revolutionary government has been brought to the front, not so much by the progress of events, as by the theoretical reasoning of Social-Democrats of a certain tendency.<sup>19</sup>

In Nos. 13 and 14 [of *Vperiod*] we analysed the arguments of Martynov, who was the first to bring up this question. It turns out, however, that interest in this question is so great, and the confusion which the above-mentioned arguments have created is so enormous (see particularly No. 93 of *Iskra*)<sup>20</sup> that it is necessary to deal with this question once more. Whatever the opinion of Social-Democrats may be with regard to the probability of our having to decide this question in the near future, not merely theoretically, but practically, it is essential for the Party to be clear about immediate aims. Unless we receive a clear reply to this question it is impossible even at the present time to carry out consistent and undeviating propaganda and agitation.

We will try to bring out the quintessence of the question in dispute. If we are striving to obtain not merely concessions from the autocracy, but the absolute overthrow of the autocracy, then we must strive to substitute for the Tsarist government a provisional revolutionary government, which, on

the one hand will convene the Constituent Assembly on the basis of truly universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage, and on the other hand will be able to guarantee complete liberty during the elections. The question arises: is it permissible for the Social-Democratic Labour Party to take part in such a provisional revolutionary government? This question was first raised by the representatives of the opportunist wing in our Party, namely, by Martynov, even prior to January 9th.<sup>71</sup> Martynov (and also *Iskra*) always replied to it in the negative. Martynov always tried to reduce the arguments of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to absurdity and to *scare them* by the prospect that, in the event of successful work being conducted for the purpose of organising the revolution, and in the event of our Party taking the lead in the armed insurrection of the people, we shall *be obliged* to join the provisional revolutionary government. Such participation, he argued, would be an intolerable "usurpation of power,"<sup>72</sup> it would be a piece of "vulgar Jaurèsism" unworthy of a class Social-Democratic Party.

Let us examine the arguments of those who adhere to this view. While they are in the provisional government, they say, the Social-Democrats will have to maintain power, and the Social-Democrats, as representing the party of the proletariat, cannot hold power and refrain from striving to carry out its maximum programme, *i.e.*, they cannot refrain from attempting to bring about a social revolution.

In such an enterprise they must inevitably meet with failure at the present time, and thus bring discredit upon themselves and play into the hands of the reaction. Therefore, they say, Social-Democrats must not join the provisional revolutionary government.

This argument is based upon the fact that the democratic revolution is confused with the social revolution—the fight for a republic (this includes the whole of our minimum programme) is confused with the fight for socialism. If the Social-Democrats aimed at the immediate achievement of the social revolution, of course they would discredit themselves. It is just such confused and vague ideas as are expressed by our Social Revolutionaries that Social-Democrats have always combatted.<sup>13</sup> It is precisely for this reason that they have always insisted upon the bourgeois character of the forthcoming Russian revolution. It is precisely for this reason that they have always drawn a strict distinction between the democratic minimum programme and the socialist maximum programme.<sup>14</sup> Only individual Social-Democrats who are inclined to bow before spontaneity may forget this during the revolution, but the Party as a whole must not forget it. Those who hold this erroneous opinion fall upon their knees before spontaneity, scared to death by the idea that the progress of events will compel the Social-Democrats in the provisional revolutionary government to attempt to bring about the social

revolution against their will. If that were true, then it follows that our programme is all wrong, that it does not correspond to the progress of events. Those who grovel before spontaneity really have doubts as to whether our programme is correct or not. Their doubts (the psychological explanation of which we tried to give in previous articles), however, are totally unfounded. Our programme is correct. The progress of events will endorse it more and more. The progress of events will oblige us to carry on a desperate fight for the republic, it will practically direct our efforts, the efforts of the politically active proletariat, precisely in this direction. The progress of events in a democratic revolution will impose upon us a mass of allies from among the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry, whose real requirements make it essential to carry out our minimum programme. Consequently all these fears of our going over too rapidly to the maximum programme are simply ridiculous.

On the other hand, the fact that these allies will be imposed upon us from among the petty bourgeois democracy gives rise to other fears among Social-Democrats of a certain tendency, namely, the fear of "vulgar Jaurèsism." The resolution passed by the Amsterdam International Socialist Congress<sup>1</sup> prohibits Social-Democrats from joining a bourgeois democratic government. They say it is Jaurèsism, i.e., it is the unconscious betrayal of the interests of the proletariat, the conversion of the proletariat into

an appendage of the bourgeoisie, it means corrupting the proletariat with the tinsel of power which, as a matter of fact, is absolutely unattainable in bourgeois society.

This argument is no less erroneous. It shows that those who argue in this way have thoroughly learned by rote good resolutions, but have never understood them. They have memorised a few anti-Jaurès phrases, but have never appreciated their meaning, and therefore apply them inappropriately; they have learned the letter but not the spirit of the lessons of international Social-Democracy. Those who desire to appraise Jaurèsism from the dialectical materialist point of view must draw a strict distinction between personal motives and objective historical conditions. Personally, Jaurès was moved by the desire to save the republic, and for that purpose entered into an alliance with bourgeois democracy. The objective conditions in which this attempt was made were such that the Republic of France was already a fact and was not menaced by any real danger; the working class had every opportunity of developing independent class political organisations, but did not adequately take advantage of these opportunities, partly, it should be said, because of the copious parliamentary tinsel with which its leaders decorated themselves; as a matter of fact, the working class, objectively, was confronted by the historical task of bringing about the social revolution, from

which they were decoyed by Millerand's promises of parsimonious social reforms.

Now take Russia. Personally, revolutionary Social-Democrats, like the followers of *Vperiod* or Parvus, desire to fight for the republic, and for this purpose they enter into an alliance with the revolutionary bourgeois democracy. The objective conditions are as wide apart from those in France as the earth from the sky. The objective historical progress of affairs has confronted the Russian proletariat with the task of bringing about a democratic bourgeois revolution (the substance of which, for the sake of brevity, we would describe by the term "republic"). This task confronts the whole people, *i.e.*, the whole mass of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Unless this revolution is brought about first, anything like the extensive development of an independent class organisation for the social revolution is inconceivable.

Picture to yourselves concretely the differences that exist between the objective conditions in the two countries, and then tell us: what should be thought of those who forget about this difference, who are carried away by the similarity of certain words, letters and personal motives?

Because in France Jaurès bowed before bourgeois social reform and improperly screened himself behind his personal desire to fight for the republic, therefore we Social-Democrats must abstain from

seriously fighting for the republic! This sums up the wisdom of the new *Iskra*-ists.

Is it not clear that it is impossible for the proletariat to carry on a fight for the republic unless it allies itself with the petty-bourgeois mass of the people? Is it not clear that unless the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry is established there cannot be a shadow of a hope of success in this fight? One of the principal weaknesses of the view that we are examining is its lifeless and stereotyped character, the fact that it ignores the conditions of revolutionary times. To fight for the republic and at the same time to reject the revolutionary democratic dictatorship would be the same as if Count Oyama decided to commence the battle of Mukden against General Kuropatkin, convinced beforehand that he would not take Mukden.<sup>76</sup> If we, the revolutionary people, i.e., the proletariat and the peasantry, desire to fight together against the autocracy, then we must jointly hunt it down and kill it and jointly resist every attempt that will inevitably be made to revive it. (In order to avoid possible misunderstandings we again state that by "republic" we mean not only, or even not so much, a form of administration, but the sum of the democratic reforms contained in the minimum programme.) One must indeed have a pedantic conception of history to imagine that things can go smoothly, without leaps, along a slowly and steadily rising curve: first will come the turn of the Liberal

big bourgeoisie—trifling concessions from the autocracy; then the turn of the revolutionary petty-bourgeoisie—the democratic republic; and finally the turn of the proletariat—social revolution. This picture is true as a whole (*à la longue*, as the French say) over a long period of years, even a century (for example, for France in the period from 1789 to 1905), but one must indeed be a pedantic amateur to draw up in a revolutionary period one's plans of activity according to this scheme. Even if the Russian autocracy fails to save itself at the present time by granting a restricted constitution, if it is to be not only shaken but completely overthrown, gigantic exertion of revolutionary efforts on the part of all progressive classes will still be required to defend this gain. And the defence of this gain is nothing more or less than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The more we win at the present time, and the more energetically we defend what we have gained, the less will the inevitable reaction that will follow be able to take back from us, the shorter will be the period of reaction, and the easier will be the task of the proletarian fighters who follow our lead.

At this juncture certain people come along and desire beforehand, before the struggle has commenced, to measure off carefully with a yardstick a modest piece of future gains. These are the people who, prior to the fall of the autocracy, even prior to January 9th, took it into their heads to

scare the working class of Russia with the bogey of the horrible revolutionary democratic dictatorship! And these wielders of yardsticks lay claim to the title of "revolutionary Social-Democrats. . . "

"Take part in the provisional government side by side with the bourgeois revolutionary democracy?" they wail. "Why, that means to sanctify the bourgeois system, to sanctify the prisons and police, unemployment and poverty, private property and prostitution." This argument is worthy either of an anarchist or of a Narodnik. Social-Democrats never turn their backs on the struggle for political liberty on the ground that the fight is for bourgeois political liberties. Social-Democrats regard the "sanctity" of the bourgeois system from the historical point of view. When Feuerbach was asked whether he revered the materialism of Büchner, Vogt and Molleschott" he replied: "I revere materialism in its relation to the past, but not in relation to the future." Social-Democrats revere the bourgeois system in the same way. They have never feared and do not fear to say that they respect the republican democratic bourgeois system as compared with the autocratic feudal bourgeois system, but they "sanctify" the bourgeois republic only as the last form of class domination, as the most convenient arena for the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. They do not sanctify it for its prisons and its police, for its property and prostitution, but

for an extensive and free struggle against these charming institutions.

We are far from asserting, of course, that our participation in a revolutionary provisional government does not present any danger at all to Social-Democracy. There is no form of struggle, no political situation which is not fraught with dangers. If revolutionary class instinct and a complete philosophy standing on the level of science are lacking, if (without offence to the comrades of *Iskra*, be it said) one's brains are not in order, then it is dangerous to take part in strikes, for it may lead to Economism, it is dangerous to take part in the parliamentary struggle, for it may end in parliamentary cretinism, and support of the zemstvo Liberal democracy may lead to the "plan for the zemstvo campaign."<sup>99</sup> Under such circumstances it would be dangerous even to read the very useful works of Jaurès and Aulard on the French revolution, because it may lead to Martynov writing a pamphlet on *Two Dictatorships!*<sup>100</sup>

Of course, if the Social-Democrats even for a moment forgot the special class features that distinguish the proletariat from the petty bourgeoisie, if they inopportunely concluded a disadvantageous alliance with an intellectual petty bourgeois party which is not deserving of confidence,<sup>101</sup> if Social-Democrats forgot even for a moment the independent aims and the necessity (under all political situations and political changes) to keep in the forefront

the development of the class-consciousness of the proletariat and its independent political organisations, then participation in the provisional revolutionary government would be extremely dangerous. But, under such conditions, we repeat, any political step we may take would be dangerous. The simplest reference will reveal how unfounded are all these fears in connection with the immediate tasks that confront revolutionary Social-Democracy. We shall not refer to ourselves, we shall not reproduce the numerous declarations and warnings concerning this question that we have uttered in the pages of *Vperiod*.<sup>12</sup> We shall refer to Parvus. In arguing in favour of Social-Democrats participating in the provisional revolutionary government, he strongly emphasises the conditions under which this may be done, and which must never be forgotten: "Strike together but march separately; no merging of organisations; watch the ally as you would an enemy," etc. We will not deal in greater detail with this aspect of the question as it has already been dealt with in previous articles.

No, the real political danger that confronts Social-Democracy at the present time is not to be found where the new *Iskra*-ists are looking for it. It is not the idea of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry that should scare us, but the spirit of khvostism and lifelessness which is harmfully affecting the Party of the proletariat with its various theories of organ-

isation process, arming process, etc. Take for example the very latest attempt of *Iskra* to draw a distinction between a provisional revolutionary government and a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Is this not an example of lifeless scholasticism? Those who invent such distinctions are capable of writing beautifully, but are absolutely incapable of thinking. There is about as much connection between the two forms indicated above as there is between juridical form and class substance. He who says "provisional revolutionary government," emphasising the political and juridical aspect of the question, emphasises the origin of the government not from the law, but from revolution, and indicates the provisional character of the government and its connection with the future Constituent Assembly. But whatever the form, the origin and the conditions, it is clear at all events that the provisional revolutionary government cannot but rely upon certain classes. It is sufficient to bear this elementary fact in mind to enable one to understand that the provisional revolutionary government cannot be anything else than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and by *Iskra* merely drags the Party backwards, to fruitless verbal disputes, away from the concrete analysis of the class interests in the Russian revolution.

Or take *Iskra's* other argument. Referring to the slogan "Long Live the Revolutionary Provisional Government!"<sup>13</sup> it says edifyingly: "To combine

the words 'Long Live' and 'Government' defiles the lips." Is not this a hollow-sounding phrase? They talk about the overthrow of the autocracy and at the same time fear to defile themselves by hailing the revolutionary government! It is surprising that they do not fear defilement by hailing the republic, for we must assume that republic is government and not a single Social-Democrat doubts for a moment that it is a bourgeois government. What difference is there between hailing a provisional revolutionary government and hailing a democratic republic? Must Social-Democracy, the political guide of the most revolutionary class, imitate the anæmic and hysterical old maid who prudishly insists that nude statues must be decorated with fig-leaves? May it hail what is understood to be a bourgeois democratic government but not frankly hail the provisional revolutionary democratic government?

Tableau! The insurrection of the St. Petersburg workers is successful. The autocracy is overthrown, a provisional revolutionary government has been established. The armed workers shout with enthusiasm: "Long Live the Provisional Revolutionary Government!" At the side are the new *Iskra*-ists; and raising their innocent, sorrowful eyes to heaven, and beating their morally sensitive breasts, they fervently pray: "We thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast not made us like unto these publicans and sinners and that we have not defiled our lips with such combinations of words. . . ."

No, a thousand times no, comrades! Do not fear that you will be defiled by most energetic and undaunted participation in the republican revolution side by side with the revolutionary bourgeois democracy. Do not exaggerate the dangers of this participation, for our organised proletariat can quite easily overcome them. Months of revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry will do more than decades passed in the peaceful, stultifying atmosphere of political stagnation. If after January 9th, under conditions of political slavery, the Russian working class was able to mobilise more than a million proletarians for the purpose of a collective, stubborn and resolute attack, then under conditions of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship, we will organise tens of millions of the urban and rural poor, we will make the Russian political revolution the prologue to the European social revolution.

*Vperiod No. 14, March 30th, 1905.*

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The above article did not put an end to the controversy. On the contrary, Plekhanov, among others, took exception to a passage in which Lenin wrote (*Iskra* No. 96, April 5th) that to imagine that first the Liberal bourgeoisie, then the democratic petty-bourgeoisie, and finally the socialist proletariat, would each in turn succeed to power in smooth and regular rotation was a schoolboy's conception of history and the attitude of a pedantic amateur. What? That Lenin should treat Marx as a schoolboy and a pedantic amateur! Did not

Marx in 1850, in a circular issued by the Communist League, declare that the events of 1848-49 had brought the Liberal big bourgeoisie to the front and that a fresh revolution would break out in which the democratic petty-bourgeoisie would have the dominating influence? The Social-Democrats must defeat the big bourgeoisie by concerted action with that petty-bourgeoisie, but they must march separately from them. While the petty-bourgeoisie ascended to power they must dictate to it such conditions as would facilitate the substitution in the future of the rule of the democratic bourgeoisie by that of the proletariat. After the revolution, they must constitute a powerful opposition party which would drive the petty-bourgeois government forward by its criticism. Consequently the workers' slogan must be: "Permanent revolution."

This is the gist of the passage as summarised by Plekhanov, a passage which played such a big part in the polemics of that period. At the Third Congress Lenin replied that the term "pedants" was applied not to Marx, but to Martynov and Martov; Marx's scheme (bourgeois autocracy, monarchy and petty-bourgeois democratic republic) was right on the whole, "but we would be pedants if we adhered rigidly to this scheme without allowing for the possibility of some variation." Marx's advice held good for the period when the popular revolt had just been crushed, or when we were on the eve of a victorious revolution. Marx, therefore, had no occasion to talk of the proletariat participating in a provisional revolutionary government, and Plekhanov was deceiving his readers by asserting that "Marx even countenanced the idea that the political representatives of the proletariat could co-operate with the representatives of the petty-bourgeoisie in the creation of a new social order." The fact is that Marx never discussed

the question. Plekhanov was arguing in the abstract, whereas the *Vperiod* reasoned "in a practical way, taking into account the real social forces operating in the struggle for the democratic revolution in Russia."

The conference which was convened by the Mensheviks in Geneva in the middle of April decided that "Social-Democracy must throughout the revolution try to maintain a position that would best allow it to drive the revolution onward and yet leave its hands free in its struggle against the inconsistency and selfishness of the bourgeois parties and prevent it from becoming absorbed in the bourgeois democracy. Accordingly, Social-Democracy must not aim at sharing power in the provisional government, but must remain a party of the extreme revolutionary opposition." Only in a single instance must Social-Democracy strive to seize power and hold it as long as possible, namely, in case the revolution spread to the western countries, more or less ripe for socialism, for then it would be possible to widen the scope of the Russian revolution and enter upon the way of social reforms.

On April 19th, 1905, the Third Congress passed a resolution on the question of the provisional revolutionary government, recapitulating the ideas expressed by Lenin, but with certain more exact definitions reached as a result of the discussions. The resolution stated that at a given stage of the revolution there would necessarily arise a revolutionary government which the proletariat would expect to carry out the minimum programme of Social-Democracy. Under certain circumstances, which it was not possible to forecast exactly, "it would be permissible for our Party delegates to participate in the provisional revolutionary government in order to conduct a ruthless struggle against all counter-revolutionary attempts and to defend the true

interests of the working class." These delegates must be strictly controlled by the Party. Irrespective of whether participation in the Government was possible or not, "the idea must be advocated as widely as possible among the proletariat that constant pressure must be brought to bear on the provisional government by the proletariat, armed and led by Social-Democracy, with a view to safeguarding, affirming and extending the conquests of the revolution."

**O**N the 27th of April, 1905, there closed in London the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, which had been called by an agreement between the Central Committee and the Bureau of the Majority Committees, but which the Bolsheviks alone attended. The Menshevik delegates, conforming to the instructions of the Party Council, over which Plekhanov presided, had gone to Geneva, and there organised the "First All-Russian Conference of the Militant Members of the Party."

As the majority of the Russian Committees (20 out of a total of 34) were represented in London, the Congress must be considered, according to the rules adopted at the Second Congress, as the sole interpreter of the Party's will. In regard to the "detached Party faction," namely the Mensheviks, the Congress decided that all Party members must combat their deviations (the theory of organisation processes, relaxation of discipline, the exaggerated application of the election principle, the under-estimation of the organising rôle of the Party in the uprising, the rejection of all participation in a provisional democratic government), but that they would be tolerated in the Party organisations "provided they unconditionally recognise the Party Congresses and rules and undertake to submit entirely to their discipline." At the same time, the Congress, taking into consideration that the editors of *Iskra* had not appeared and that their conduct "did not guarantee the proper future handling of tactical questions," declared that *Iskra* was "no longer the central organ of the Party," and instructed the new Central Committee "to publish a new central organ . . . which shall be called *Proletarii* (*The Proletarian*)."

*Vperiod*, the organ of the Bolshevik faction, being

no longer necessary, since this faction had now amalgamated with the Party, ceased publication, and the first issue of *The Proletarian*, also directed by Lenin, appeared on May 14th, 1905.

On May 15th, *Iskra*, in a supplement to its issue No. 100, published the resolutions of the Menshevik Conference. Both assemblies—the Congress and the Conference—had examined more or less the same problems: the insurrection, the provisional government, the peasants' movement, relations with the Liberal bourgeoisie, the Party split. It was easy, therefore, to compare the decisions at which each had arrived. This Lenin did in a pamphlet which he started writing before the events in Odessa, that is, before the "Potemkin" mutiny and the shootings of June 15th, but which he concluded in July, and which was published only on the 21st of July, 1905. This pamphlet was called *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*.

After analysing the resolution of the Congress on the provisional revolutionary government, Lenin criticises, consecutively, every item of the Menshevik resolution, with its doubtful expressions such as "the decisive victory of the revolution over Tsarism," instead of "the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants," the "definite liquidation of the monarchist regime" instead of "the democratic republic," "to drive the revolution onward," instead of the "provisional revolutionary government"; he shows how the Menshevik, and not the Bolshevik, tactics played the game of the bourgeois democracy, as evidenced by the overt sympathy for the new *Iskra* displayed by *Osvobozhdenye*. The concluding sentences of the pamphlet were as follows: "What are needed are slogans that will raise the revolutionary and republican bourgeoisie to the level

of the proletariat, and not lower the proletariat to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie. Therefore, we must with all energy participate in the insurrection and not seek for reasons to steal away from the pressing duty of revolt." However, by that time Lenin had received No. 104 of *Iskra* (issued on the 1st of July), which continued the resolutions adopted by a "Congress of Militant Members of the Georgian Party," held May 10th-12th, in that Caucasian province where the Social-Democratic Party wielded considerable influence among the peasants and had been most active at the time of the March revolts.

As, in this resolution, Lenin detected, in a more pronounced form than ever before, the old ideas of the Mensheviks, who subsequently became bourgeois Liberals, and fearing lest they turned away from, or even turned against, the revolution—he added the following chapter to his pamphlet.

## **TWO TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION**

### *12. Will the Sweep of the Democratic Revolution be Diminished if the Bourgeoisie Leaves It?"*

The foregoing lines were already written when we received a copy of the resolutions passed by the Caucasian conference of the new *Iskra*-ists which have been published by *Iskra*. We could not wish for anything better than this material *pour la bonne bouche*, for a good ending.

The Editorial Board of *Iskra* quite justly remarks : "On the fundamental question of tactics, the Caucasian conference arrived at a decision analogous" (in truth !) "to the one arrived at by the National Conference" (i.e., of the new *Iskra*-ists). . . . "On the question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards the provisional revolutionary government, the Caucasian comrades adopted an extremely hostile attitude towards the new method advocated by the *Vperiod* group and the delegates of the so-called Congress" who are affiliated to it. . . . It must be recognised that the tactics of the proletarian party in a bourgeois revolution as formulated by the conference are very appropriate."

What is true is true. A more "appropriate" formulation of the fundamental errors of the new *Iskra*-ists no one could invent. We will reproduce this formula in full, first of all indicating in paren-

thesis the buds, and then later, we will expose the fruit.

#### RESOLUTION OF THE CAUCASIAN CONFERENCE OF THE NEW ISKRA-ISTS ON THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

"Considering it to be our task to utilise the revolutionary situation to make more profound" (Of course! They should have added: "according to Martynov"), "the Social-Democratic consciousness of the proletariat" (Only to make consciousness more profound, but not to establish a republic? What a "profound" conception of revolution!), "in order to preserve for the Party complete freedom to criticise the rising bourgeois State system" (It is not our business to preserve the republic! Our business is only to preserve freedom of criticism. Anarchist ideas<sup>\*\*</sup> give rise to Anarchist language: "bourgeois State system"!), "the conference expresses its opposition to the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government or to joining it" (Recall the resolution quoted by Engels, which was passed by the Bakuninists ten months before the Spanish revolution: see *Proletarii*, No. 3), "but considers it more expedient to exercise pressure from without" (from below and not from above) "upon the bourgeois provisional government for the adequate (?) democratisation of the State system. The conference believes that the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government, or entry into the government, would lead, on the one hand, to the

masses of the proletariat becoming disappointed in the Social-Democratic Party and abandoning it because the Social-Democrats, in spite of the fact that they had seized power, would not be able to satisfy the pressing needs of the working class, including the establishment of socialism" (The republic is not a pressing need! The authors, in their innocence, failed to observe that they were speaking in the language of Anarchists, that they were speaking as if they were repudiating participation in bourgeois revolutions!), "and on the other hand, *would induce the bourgeois classes to abandon the cause of the revolution and in that way diminish its sweep.*"

This is the nigger in the wood-pile. This is where Anarchist ideas become interwoven (as constantly occurs among West European Bernsteinians) with the purest opportunism. Just imagine: not to enter the provisional government because this will induce the bourgeoisie to abandon the cause of the revolution and diminish the sweep of the revolution! This is an example of the new *Iskra* philosophy in its complete, pure and consistent form: As the revolution is a bourgeois revolution, therefore we must bow to bourgeois vulgarity and make way for it. If we were to be guided, if only partly, if only for a moment, by the consideration that our participation may induce the bourgeoisie to abandon the revolution, then we would surrender the leadership of the revolution entirely to the bourgeois classes. By that we would place the proletariat entirely at

the mercy of the bourgeois (while retaining for ourselves complete "freedom of criticism"!!) and compel the proletariat to be meek and mild in order not to frighten the bourgeoisie away. We would betray the immediate needs of the proletariat, namely, its political needs—which the Economists and their imitators never thoroughly understood—out of fear that the bourgeoisie would be scared away. We would abandon the field of the revolutionary struggle for the achievement of democracy within the limits required by the proletariat, in favour of the field of bargaining with the bourgeoisie and obtaining their voluntary consent (not to abandon the revolution) at the price of our principles and of the revolution itself.

In two brief lines the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ists managed to express the quintessence of the tactics of betraying the revolution and of converting the proletariat into a miserable appendage of the bourgeois classes. The mistakes of the new *Iskra*-ists, to which we referred above<sup>88</sup> as a tendency, now stand before us elevated to the level of a clear and definite principle, viz., to drag at the tail of the monarchist bourgeoisie. Because the achievement of the republic would induce (and is already inducing—Struve,<sup>89</sup> for example) the bourgeoisie to abandon the revolution, therefore, down with the fight for the republic! Because the bourgeoisie always and everywhere is scared by every energetic, democratic demand put forward and carried to its logical con-

clusion by the proletariat, therefore, hide in your dens, comrades, workers; act only from below; do not dream of utilising the weapon of the bourgeois State system in the revolutionary struggle, and preserve for yourselves the "freedom of criticism"!

The fundamental error in the conception of the term "bourgeois revolution" has come to the surface. The Martynov or new *Iskra* conception of the term leads directly to the betrayal to the bourgeoisie of the cause of the proletariat.

Those who have forgotten the old Economism, those who fail to study it and do not recall it to mind, will find it difficult to understand the present off-shoot of Economism. Recall the Bernsteinian *Credo*.<sup>10</sup> From the "purely proletarian" point of view and programmes, these people drew the conclusion that the business of the Social-Democrat is to concern himself with economics, real labour affairs, freedom to criticise all politics; to make Social-Democratic work more profound. Politics is the business of Liberals. God save us from dropping into "revolutionism"; that will induce the bourgeoisie to abandon the revolution. Those who will read the *Credo* to the very end, or the supplements to No. 9 of *Rabotchaya Mysl* (September, 1899), will be able to follow the whole process of this reasoning.

The same thing is taking place at the present time, only on a larger scale, and in application to the whole of the "great" Russian revolution—alas,

vulgarised and degraded beforehand to a caricature by the theoreticians of orthodox philistinism! It is the business of Social-Democrats to preserve freedom of criticism, to make consciousness more profound, to act from without. The bourgeois classes must have freedom to act, a free field for revolutionary (read: Liberal) leadership, the freedom to introduce reforms from above.

These vulgarisers of Marxism have never pondered over Marx's words concerning the need for substituting the weapon of criticism for the criticism of arms.<sup>91</sup> While they speak in the name of Marx, they actually draw up resolutions on tactics absolutely in the spirit of the Frankfurt bourgeois gossips who freely criticise absolutism, make democratic consciousness more profound, but who ignore the fact that the time of revolution is the time of action, both from above and from below.<sup>92</sup> In converting Marxism into a subject for hair-splitting, they convert the ideology of the most progressive, most determined and energetic, revolutionary class into the ideology of the most undeveloped strata of that class which shrinks from difficult revolutionary democratic tasks and leaves them to be solved by the Struves.

If the bourgeois classes abandon the revolution because the Social-Democrats join the revolutionary government, the "sweep of the revolution will diminish."

Do you hear this, Russian workers? The sweep

of the revolution will be stronger if it be carried out, not by the Social-Democrats scaring the Struves, who do not wish to achieve victory over Tsarism, but by coming to an arrangement with them. The sweep of the revolution will be stronger if, of the two possible outcomes which we have outlined above, the first comes about, *i.e.*, if the monarchist bourgeoisie comes to an understanding with the autocracy on the basis of a "constitution" like the Shipov constitution!"

Social-democrats who write such shameful things in resolutions intended for the guidance of the whole Party, or who approve of such "appropriate" resolutions, are so absorbed in their hair-splitting, which crushes all the living spirit of Marxism, that they fail to observe how these resolutions convert all their previous excellent words into mere phrase-mongering. Take any article in *Iskra*, take the notorious pamphlet written by our celebrated Martynov, and you will read there about the *popular* insurrection, about carrying the revolution to the *very end*, about striving to rely upon *the rank and file of the people*, in the fight against the inconsistent bourgeoisie. But all these excellent things become miserable phrase-mongering immediately you accept or approve of the idea that "the sweep of the revolution will be diminished" if the bourgeoisie abandon it. One of two things, gentlemen: either we, together with the people, must strive to bring about the revolution and obtain complete

victory over Tsarism, *in spite of* the inconsistency, selfishness, and cowardice of the bourgeoisie, or we do not accept this "in spite of," we fear that the bourgeoisie will abandon the revolution: in the latter case we place the proletariat and the people at the mercy of the inconsistent selfish and cowardly bourgeoisie.

Don't make any attempt to misinterpret what I have said. Do not start howling that you are being charged with deliberate treachery. No, you have been crawling, and have now got into the mire as unconsciously as the Economists crawled into it, drawn inexorably and irrevocably down the inclined plane of making Marxism "profound" to anti-revolutionary, soulless and lifeless hair-splitting.

Have you ever considered, gentlemen, what are the real social forces that determine the "sweep of the revolution"? Leave aside the force of foreign politics, of international combinations, which have turned out so favourably for us at the present time" but which we leave out of our discussion, and quite rightly so, in so far as we are discussing the internal forces of Russia. Observe the internal social forces. Against the revolution are rallied the autocracy, the Court, the police, the government officials, the armed forces and a handful of high dignitaries. The more profound the indignation of the people becomes, the less reliable become the troops, and the more the government officials begin to waver. Moreover, the bourgeoisie as a whole

favours the revolution, makes passionate speeches about liberty, and more and more frequently talks in the name of the people, and even in the name of the revolution."<sup>5</sup> But we Marxists know from our theories and from daily and hourly observations of our Liberals, zemstvo workers and followers of *Osvobozhdenye*, that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, selfish and cowardly in its support of the revolution. The bourgeoisie in the mass will inevitably turn towards counter-revolution, towards the autocracy, against the revolution and against the people, immediately its narrow selfish interests are met, immediately it "abandons" consistent democracy (*it has already abandoned it!*). There remains the "people"; that is the proletariat and the peasantry. The proletariat alone is capable of proceeding reliably to the end, for its goal lies far beyond the democratic revolution. That is why the proletariat fights in the front ranks for the republic and contemptuously rejects the advice that is given to it to take care not to scare the bourgeoisie. The peasantry to a large extent consists of semi-proletarian elements who live side by side with the petty bourgeois elements.<sup>6</sup> This causes it also to be a wavering element and compels the proletariat to combine in a strictly class party. But the instability of the peasantry differs radically from the instability of the bourgeoisie, for at the present time the peasantry is interested, not so much in the absolute preservation of private property as in the

confiscation of the landlords' land, which is one of the principal forms of private property."<sup>7</sup> This does not cause the peasantry to become socialist or cease to be petty bourgeois, but the peasantry can become a wholehearted and radical adherent of the democratic revolution. The peasantry will inevitably become such if only the progress of revolutionary events, which is enlightening it, be not broken off by the treachery of the bourgeoisie and the defeat of the proletariat. With this reservation, the peasantry will inevitably become a bulwark of the revolution and the republic, for only a completely victorious revolution can give the peasantry *everything* in the sphere of agrarian reforms—*everything* that the peasants desire, of which they dream and of which they truly stand in need (not for the abolition of capitalism as the Social Revolutionaries imagine, but in order to raise themselves out of the mire of semi-serfdom, out of the gloom of ignorance and servitude, in order to improve their conditions of life in so far as it is possible to improve them under commodity production).

Moreover, the peasantry is drawn to the revolution not only by radical agrarian reform, but by its general and permanent interests.<sup>75</sup> Even in its fight with the proletariat, the peasantry stands in need of democracy, for only a democratic system is capable of exactly expressing its interests and of giving it predominance as the mass and the majority. The more enlightened the peasantry becomes (and since

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ened much more rapidly than is imagined by those who are accustomed to measure enlightenment by the school standard), the more consistent and determined will it be in its support of the complete democratic revolution; for, unlike the bourgeoisie, it is not scared by the rule of the people, but, on the contrary, regards it as advantageous. The democratic republic will become the ideal of the peasantry as soon as it abandons its naive monarchism, for the conscious monarchism of the merchant bourgeoisie (Upper Chamber etc.), implies for the peasantry the same disfranchisement, ignorance and oppression as exist to-day, slightly polished with the varnish of European constitutionalism.

That is why the bourgeoisie as a class naturally inevitably strives to come under the wing of the Liberal monarchist party, while the peasantry in the mass strives to come under the leadership of the revolutionary and republican party. That is why the bourgeoisie is incapable of carrying the democratic revolution to its ultimate conclusion, while the peasantry is capable of doing so; and we must exert all our efforts to help it to do so.

It may be objected: there is no need to argue about that, that is all elementary. All Social-Democrats understand that perfectly well... But this is not true. Those who talk about "the sweep" of the revolution being "diminished" because the bourgeoisie will abandon it, do not understand this.

These people simply repeat by rote the words of our agrarian programme without understanding their meaning, for otherwise they would not be scared by the conception of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, which follows logically from the Marxian philosophy and from our programme; otherwise they would not restrict the sweep of the Great Russian Revolution by the desires of the bourgeoisie. These people defeat their abstract Marxian revolutionary phrases by their concretely anti-Marxian and anti-revolutionary resolutions.

Those who really understand the rôle of the peasantry in the victorious Russian revolution would not dream of saying that the sweep of the revolution would be diminished if the bourgeoisie were to abandon it, for, as a matter of fact, the Russian revolution will assume the widest sweep a bourgeois democratic revolution can possibly have only when the bourgeoisie abandons it and when the masses of the peasantry come out as real revolutionaries side by side with the proletariat. In order that it may be carried to its logical conclusion, our democratic revolution must rely on such forces as are capable of paralysing the inevitable inconsistency of the bourgeoisie (*i.e.*, capable of "compelling it to abandon the revolution," which the Caucasian adherents of *Iskra* fear so much because they failed to think out things).

*The proletariat must carry the democratic revo-*

*lution to its logical end, and in so doing, must bring over to its side the masses of the peasantry in order to break the power of resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must bring about a social revolution, and in so doing must bring over to its side the masses of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to break the power of resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie.* Such are the tasks of the proletariat, which the new *Iskra*-ists, in their arguments and resolutions about the sweep of the revolution, present in a very restricted form.

One circumstance, however, must not be forgotten, though it is frequently lost sight of when arguing about the "sweep" of the revolution. It must not be forgotten that the argument is not about the difficulties of the tasks, but about by what path and in what manner we can achieve their fulfilment. The question is not whether it is difficult or not to make the sweep of the revolution powerful and invincible, but how we are to act in order to enlarge the sweep of the revolution. The difference of opinion exists over the fundamental character and direction of our activity. We emphasise this because careless people too frequently mix up the two questions, namely, the question of the direction in which the road is leading, *i.e.*, the selection of one of two roads, with the question of

the facility with which the goal can be reached or its nearness on the given road.

We did not deal with this question previously because it did not raise any difference of opinion in the Party, but it goes without saying that the question is extremely important in itself and deserves the most serious attention on the part of Social-Democrats. It would be a piece of unpardonable optimism to forget the difficulties which accompany the task of bringing into the movement not only the working class, but also the peasantry. This difficulty has more than once been the rock against which all the efforts to carry democratic revolution to its logical conclusion have broken themselves in vain. And always it was the inconsistent and selfish bourgeoisie which triumphed, because it acquired capital in the shape of monarchist protection against the people and preserved the innocence of Liberalism.<sup>99</sup> But the fact that difficulties exist does not mean that such difficulties are insurmountable. We must be convinced that the path chosen is the correct one, and this conviction will increase revolutionary energy and revolutionary enthusiasm a hundred-fold, it can perform miracles.

How deep is the gulf that divides Social-Democrats to-day on the question of the path to be chosen can immediately be seen by comparing the Caucasian resolution of the new *Iskra*-ists with the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The resolution of the Congress

says that the bourgeoisie is inconsistent; it will undoubtedly try to deprive us of the gains of the revolution. Therefore, make energetic preparations for the fight, comrades and fellow workers. Arm yourselves, bring the peasantry to your side. We will not surrender the gains of the revolution to the selfish bourgeoisie without a fight. The resolution of the Caucasian new *Iskra*-ists says: the bourgeoisie is inconsistent, it may abandon the revolution. Therefore, comrades and fellow workers, please do not think of joining the provisional government, for if you do, the bourgeoisie will surely abandon the revolution, and the sweep of the revolution will therefore become diminished.

One side says: urge the revolution forward to its logical conclusion in spite of the resistance or the passivity of the inconsistent bourgeoisie.

The other side says: do not think of carrying revolution to the end independently, for if you do, the inconsistent bourgeoisie will abandon it.

Are these not two diametrically opposite points of view? Is it not obvious that one set of tactics excludes the other? Is it not clear that the first set of tactics are the only tactics a revolutionary Social-Democrat can adopt? And that the second are in fact purely Liberal tactics?

FROM the 9th of January onwards, the autocracy and the bureaucracy had to give way before the menace of the revolutionary movement. On 18th February, a decree, addressed by the Tsar to the new Minister for Home Affairs, Bulygin, announced his intention "with the grace of God to call upon worthy men, invested with the confidence of the people and elected by them, to participate in the preliminary study and examination of legislative projects." As a result, a commission was appointed charged with the elaboration of the new Constitution.

As has been remarked, this concession satisfied nobody. During March, April and May, local strikes continually broke out, now in one place, now in another; agrarian troubles spread, affecting an increasing number of districts; the zemstvos and congresses of intellectuals passed political resolutions demanding real reforms. There was a new phenomenon; office employees, doctors, writers, school teachers, in a word, the "democracy," the urban petty bourgeoisie, which, since 1904 had awokened to political life through the *Osvobozhdenye*, grouped themselves in political organisations, and, under the pressure of events, moved towards the parties of the left. On 8th of May, fourteen of these unions held a congress in Moscow, laid the foundations for a "Union of Unions" and demanded a Constituent Assembly.

The naval disaster of Tsu-Shima on 14th May roused even the least advanced sections of the bourgeoisie to a high pitch of excitement.

About this time, the official press of the Government considered it necessary to publish information about the Constitution which the Bulygin commission was to bring forth: a "Duma," of which the name itself em-

phasises its purely deliberative character, to meet for a month and a half or two months during the year; an Upper House, which was to be no other than the already existing Council of State nominated by the Tsar; and, finally, a system of elections by three stages, admitting to the franchise the bourgeoisie and the property-holding peasants, the merchants, the big landlords and the higher rank of the liberal professions, but totally excluding the workers and the poor intellectuals. This project could satisfy none of the elements of the Opposition, in view of the dictatorial regime of General Trepov, the pogroms directly provoked or tolerated by the police, the brutal tyranny of the bureaucracy and the incessant military defeats. The deputation delegated by the Congress of Zemstvos to pay homage to the Tsar at Peterhoff on 6th of June, 1905, created a scandal in "society" by a demonstration of loyalism which already seemed out of place.

Soon a revolutionary event, the greatest since 9th of January, took place: the mutiny of the crew of the cruiser "Potemkin," which was supported by some other ships of the Black Sea Fleet (14th June). The contact of the sailors in revolt with the workers on strike at Odessa gave rise in the town to a turbulent situation which bore the features of a small civil war. On 9th of July, there broke out in Lodz, the big textile centre of Poland, a general strike, which before long developed into a local insurrection complete with barricades valiantly defended against troops.

However, the labours of the Bulygin Conference were drawing to a close, and the various groups began to determine their attitude in view of the coming elections.

The Third Congress of the Union of Unions, held on 1st to 3rd July at Terioki to evade the police, dis-

played an extremely radical spirit. The 80 delegates unanimously condemned the parody of popular representation offered by the Government. A strong majority decided to launch a big campaign to invoke a general movement of protest, in the form of a demonstration strike of some days' duration, to prevent by every means the holding of the elections and to demand real popular representation. A resolution adopted by 9 out of the 16 unions represented forbade their adherents either personally to take part in the elections to the State Duma or to carry on any agitation whatever in favour of the Duma. The unions of professors and writers formed a minority which decided to take part in the elections to return democratic candidates.

From 6th to 8th of July a semi-legal congress of zemstvos and urban municipalities was held. The congress made a big noise. After "Democracy" it was "Liberalism" that was to take a hand. The results, however, were very meagre. The majority was for boycotting the Bulygin Constitution, while the organisation committee was against. An agreement was reached on a compromise, viz., to leave the question open till the publication of the project, and then to convene a new congress by telegram. The congress, none the less, condemned in principle the official project, adopted the demands of the *Osvobozhdenye*, that is, constitutional monarchy with an Upper and a Lower House, and issued an appeal to the people inviting them to unite to win real national representation and universal suffrage.

On the other hand, the Congress of Zemstvo Constitutionalists, which was held from 9th to 11th July, decided to take part in the elections and constituted for the purpose a new party, the Constitutional Demo-

cratic Party (which very soon began to be called, on account of its initials, the K.D. or Cadet Party).

Among the Social-Democrats a divergence of opinion concerning tactics appeared between the two fractions. In *Iskra* (No. 101 of 1st June) the Mensheviks had already emphasised the importance of the new phase which the revolution was entering: it was necessary, they argued, to be prepared to utilise events to achieve the Social-Democratic demand of a Constituent Assembly elected on equal, direct, secret and universal suffrage; and for this purpose to form semi-legal "workers' agitation committees," which would, in close contact with the illegal party, make use of the electoral campaign and would compel the enfranchised classes, through their representatives in the Duma, to press for the Constituent Assembly and the requisite safeguards. Further, these committees would hold their own elections, apart from the legal elections, in which the workers in any case would not participate. This could lead to the "creation of quite a network of representative organs of revolutionary self-government crowned by a nationally elected revolutionary assembly" capable of dictating its will to all other progressive groups. In No. 116 of *Iskra* (18th of July) Dan gives a precise formulation of this tactics: neither a passive boycott which would disperse the proletariat and give the reactionaries the possibility to group themselves, nor an ineffectual demonstration strike, but the organisation by the workers' agitation committees of "the election by the people of their revolutionary deputies outside the legal body established by the ministerial schemes." Thus at the top there would be a political tribune which might entail the destruction of the Bulygin Duma and substitute something better in its place. If then a general strike does break out it would not be a simple

demonstration but a means of maintaining revolutionary government. That would be the "possible prologue of more tempestuous events."

These are the plans to which Lenin opposed his Bolshevik tactics. The Third Congress of the Party had left open the question of participation in the elections. But the principal objective proposed to the Party being insurrection, it is evident that legal means like electoral agitation had to be subordinated to it.

## *THE BOYCOTT OF THE BULYGIN DUMA AND THE INSURRECTION<sup>100</sup>*

The political situation in Russia is as follows. The Bulygin Duma may soon be convened, *i.e.*, a deliberative assembly will be convened of representatives of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie, elected under the supervision and with the aid of the servants of the absolutist government on the basis of an electoral system so obsolete and reactionary that it is a downright mockery of the idea of popular representation.<sup>101</sup>

What should be our attitude towards this Duma? Liberal democrats give two replies to this question. The left-wing represented by the *Soyuz Soyuzov* (the Union of Unions), *i.e.*, principally the representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia, are in favour of boycotting it, of abstaining from taking part in the elections, and of utilising the opportunity for carrying on a strong agitation for a democratic Constitution on the basis of universal suffrage. The right-wing, however, as represented by the July Congress of Urban and Rural Social Workers, or to be more correct, a section of that Congress, is opposed to the boycott and favours taking part in the elections and getting as large a number of candidates as possible elected to the Duma. It is true that the Congress did not pass any definite resolution on this question, but put it off to the next Congress, which is to be convened by telegraph immediately the

Bulygin Constitution is proclaimed, but the opinion of the right wing of Liberal democracy has become sufficiently clearly defined.<sup>102</sup>

Revolutionary democracy, *i.e.*, principally the proletariat and its conscious expression, social-democracy, stands absolutely for insurrection. The difference in the two tactics is properly appreciated by the *Osvobozhdenye*, the organ of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie, in its issue No. 74, when, on the one hand it condemns the "open advocacy of armed insurrection" as "mad and criminal," and on the other hand criticises the boycott as "practically fruitless," and expresses the assurance that not only the zemstvos fraction of the Constitutional Democratic (read: Monarchist)<sup>103</sup> Party but also the Union of Unions will "pass their political examination," *i.e.*, abandon the idea of a boycott.<sup>104</sup>

The question arises, what should be the attitude of the party of the class-conscious proletariat towards the idea of a boycott and what tactical slogan should it advance to the forefront for the masses of the people? In order to reply to this question it is necessary first of all to bear in mind the nature of the Bulygin Constitution. It is a deal between Tsarism and the landlords and the bourgeoisie, who, for the sake of alleged Constitutional doles, absolutely harmless to the autocracy, are gradually to dissociate themselves from the revolution, *i.e.*, from the militant people, and effect a reconciliation with the autocracy. As the whole of our Constitutional

Democratic Party keenly desires to preserve the monarchy and the Upper Chamber (*i.e.*, to guarantee beforehand the political privileges and the political domination of the "Upper Ten Thousand" of the rich),<sup>105</sup> such an arrangement is not at all improbable. Moreover, such an arrangement, at least with a section of the bourgeoisie, is inevitable sooner or later, in one form or another, for it is prescribed by the very class position occupied by the bourgeoisie in the capitalist system. It is only a question as to when and in what manner this deal will be made, and the whole task of the party of the proletariat is to prevent this deal from being made for as long as possible, to split up the bourgeoisie as much as possible and to obtain the greatest possible benefits for the revolution from the temporary appeals of the bourgeoisie to the people, and in the meantime to prepare the forces of the revolutionary people (the proletariat and the peasantry) for the violent overthrow of the autocracy and for the isolation and neutralisation of the treacherous bourgeoisie.

As we have frequently pointed out already, the political position of the bourgeoisie is between the Tsar and the people. It desires to play the part of honest broker and steal into power behind the backs of the fighting people.<sup>106</sup> That is why the bourgeoisie one day appeals to the Tsar and another day to the people. To the former it makes serious and businesslike proposals for a political *geschaft* (deal), to the latter it appeals with high-

sounding phrases about liberty (Petrunkevitch's speech at the July Congress).<sup>107</sup> It is to our advantage that the bourgeoisie should appeal to the people, for, by doing so, it provides material for politically rousing and enlightening such backward masses as those whom the Social-Democrats have hitherto regarded as impossible to reach. Let the bourgeoisie shake up the more backward, let them break the ground here and there; we will untiringly sow Social-Democratic seeds in that soil. Everywhere in the West the bourgeoisie, in its fight against the autocracy, was compelled to rouse the political consciousness of the people, while striving at the same time to sow the seeds of bourgeois theory among the working class. Our business is to take advantage of the destructive work carried on by the bourgeoisie against the autocracy and steadily to enlighten the working class concerning its socialist tasks and concerning the irreconcilable hostility of its interests to those of the bourgeoisie.

From this it is clear that our tactics at the present time should be primarily to support the idea of a boycott. The question of the boycott in itself is a question of internal bourgeois democracy. The working class is not directly interested in it,<sup>108</sup> but in supporting that section of bourgeois democracy which is most revolutionary. It is interested in extending and intensifying political agitation. The appeal to boycott the Duma is a strong appeal of the bourgeoisie to the people, a development of

its agitation which widens the field for our agitation; it causes the political crisis, *i.e.*, the source of the revolutionary movement, to become more acute. If the Liberal bourgeoisie goes into the Duma its agitation will die down; it will appeal more to the Tsar than to the people and make more imminent a counter-revolutionary deal between the bourgeoisie and the Tsar.

Needless to say, even if the Bulygin Duma is not broken up it will inevitably give rise to political conflicts of which the proletariat must take advantage, but this is a matter for the future. It would be ridiculous to refuse to utilise this bourgeois-*chinovnik* Duma for the purpose of agitation and struggle, but this is not the point at the present time. At the present time, the left-wing of bourgeois democracy itself has advanced the question of a direct fight with the Duma by means of a boycott and we must exert all our efforts to support it in this determined attack. We must take the bourgeois democrats and "liberators" at their word; we must give the widest circulation to their Petrunkevitch phrases about appealing to the people, we must expose them to the people and show that the first and least test of these phrases was the question: boycott the Duma, *i.e.*, protest to the people, or accept the Duma, *i.e.*, abstain from protesting, go again to the Tsar and accept this caricature of popular representation.

Secondly, we must exert all efforts to make the

boycott serve to extend and intensify agitation and to see that it does not become mere passive abstention from voting. If I am not mistaken, this idea is already fairly widespread among the comrades working in Russia, who express their idea in the words "active boycott." As against the mere passive abstention from voting, active boycott should imply increasing agitation tenfold, organising meetings everywhere, taking advantage of election meetings for the purpose, even going to the length of breaking them up, organising demonstrations, political strikes etc. It goes without saying, that in order to advance this agitation and struggle it will be expedient to come to temporary agreements with various groups of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy, as is permitted by a number of resolutions passed by our Party,<sup>109</sup> but in doing so we must, on the one hand, steadily maintain the class distinction of the Party of the proletariat and not for a single moment cease our Social-Democratic criticism of our bourgeois allies, and, on the other hand, we should be failing in our duty as the Party of the progressive class if, in our agitation, we failed to advance the principal revolutionary slogan, which at the present time is democratic revolution.

This represents our third direct and immediate political task. As we have already said, active boycott means agitation, recruiting, organising the revolutionary forces on an enlarged scale with redoubled energy and three-fold pressure. It is im-

possible to carry on such work, however, unless we have a clear, exact and direct slogan. The only slogan of such a character that we can advance at the present time is armed insurrection. The fact that the government is convening this crudely faked "people's" assembly provides us with an excellent opportunity for carrying on agitation for a real people's government, for explaining to the masses of the people that, after the deception practised by the Tsar, and the mockery of the people<sup>10</sup> which is implied by their faked assembly, the only body that can introduce real representation of the people is a provisional revolutionary government, to establish which a victory of the armed insurrection, the actual overthrow of the Tsarist rule, is necessary. We could not wish for a better opportunity to agitate for insurrection, and in order to carry on such agitation we must be perfectly clear in our minds with regard to the programme of the provisional revolutionary government. This programme should consist of the *Six Points* which we have already drawn up (see *Proletarii*, No. 7, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government").<sup>11</sup> These points are: (1) convocation of a national Constituent Assembly; (2) arming the people; (3) political liberties—the immediate repeal of all laws infringing this; (4) complete cultural and political liberty for all oppressed and disfranchised nationalities—the Russian people cannot win freedom for itself unless it fights for the freedom of the

other nationalities [within the Russian Empire—Tr.]; (5) an eight-hour day; (6) the establishment of peasant committees for the support of and carrying out of all democratic reforms including agrarian reforms right up to the confiscation of the land of the big landlords.

Thus, we stand for the most energetic support of the idea of the boycott; for the exposure of the right-wing of the bourgeois democracy as the betrayers of democracy; for converting the boycott into active boycott, *i.e.*, to develop the widest possible agitation; for advocating armed insurrection—we must call for the immediate organisation of detachments of the revolutionary army for the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of a provisional revolutionary government; for spreading and explaining the fundamental and absolutely obligatory programme of this provisional revolutionary government, which must be the banner of the rebellion and a model in all the forthcoming repetitions of the Odessa events.

These should be the tactics of the party of the class-conscious proletariat. In order to make these tactics perfectly clear and to reach unity, we must deal with the tactics of *Iskra*. These tactics are explained in No. 106 of that paper, in an article entitled: *Defence or Attack*. We will refrain from dealing with minor and partial differences, which fall away immediately we deal with the real subject. We will deal only with the fundamental

disagreements.<sup>112</sup> *Iskra* quite justly condemns passive boycott, but in opposition to that it puts forward the idea of the immediate "organisation of revolutionary self-government" as a "possible prologue to rebellion." According to *Iskra* we must "seize the right to carry on election agitation by establishing workers' agitation committees." These committees "must aim at organising the election by the people of their revolutionary deputies outside of the limits of the laws which will be established in Ministerial Bills," we must "cover the whole country with a network of organs of revolutionary self-government."

Such slogans are worthless, they represent a confusion of ideas, from the point of view of political tasks generally, and serve as grist to the mill of the Osvobozhdentsy, from the point of view of the immediate political situation. The organisation of revolutionary self-government, the election of deputies by the people is not a *prologue* but an *epilogue* of the rebellion. To attempt to establish these organisations now, prior to rebellion and without rebellion, means to strive after absurd aims and to carry confusion into the minds of the revolutionary proletariat. We must first of all be victorious in the rebellion (if only in a single city) and establish the provisional revolutionary government, so that the latter, as the organ of the rebellion and the recognised leader of the revolutionary people, may set to work to organise revolutionary self-

government. To attempt to eclipse the slogan of rebellion by the slogan of organising revolutionary self-government, or even to push the former into the background, is like advising us first to catch the fly and then to stick it on the flypaper.

If in the celebrated Odessa days our Odessa comrades had been advised, as a prologue to rebellion, to organise, not a revolutionary army but the election of deputies by the people of Odessa, our Odessa comrades would have ridiculed such advice. *Iskra* repeats the mistake made by the Economists, who regarded the "fight for rights" as a prologue to the fight against the autocracy. *Iskra* is reverting to the unfortunate "plan for the zemstvo campaign" which eclipsed the slogan of rebellion by the theory of a "higher type of demonstration."

This is not the place to investigate the origin of the tactical error committed by *Iskra*. We refer the reader who is interested in this question to the pamphlet written by N. Lenin, entitled *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*.<sup>113</sup> It is important here to point out how the new *Iskra* slogan merges into an Osvobozhdentsy slogan. In practice, an attempt to organise the election of deputies by the people before the rebellion, would play into the hands of the Osvobozhdentsy and would result in the Social-Democrats trailing in their rear. The autocracy will not permit the workers and the people to organise any elections deserving the name of popular elections (and Social-

Democrats will not be content with a comedy of popular elections under the autocracy); meanwhile the Osvobozhdentsy, zemstvo-ists and deputies will go on with the elections and, without any ceremony, pronounce them to be popular elections and an expression of revolutionary self-government. All the efforts of the Liberal monarchist bourgeoisie are now concentrated upon averting rebellion, compelling the autocracy to recognise the zemstvo elections as popular elections, without the people having won a victory over Tsarism, and upon converting the zemstvos and urban local government bodies into organs of "revolutionary" (in the Petrunkevitch sense) "self-government," without a real revolution having taken place. This attitude is excellently portrayed in No. 74 of *Osvobozhdene*. It is difficult to conceive of anything more repulsive than this press organ of the cowardly bourgeoisie, which asserts that the advocacy of rebellion demoralises the army and the people! And this is said at a time when even the blind can see that only by means of rebellion can the ordinary Russian citizen and soldier save themselves from utter demoralisation and vindicate their right of citizenship! The bourgeois Manilov pictures to himself arcadian idylls in which the mere pressure of "public opinion compels the government to make concession after concession until finally it will be compelled to hand over power to a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal, equal, direct

and secret suffrage, as is demanded by society".... (With an Upper Chamber?). "There is nothing at all improbable in this peaceful (!) transition of power from the present government to the national Constituent Assembly, which will organise State and political power on a new basis." And this brilliant philosophy of a reptile bourgeois is supplemented by the advice: to win over to our side the army, particularly the officers, to establish a people's militia "without waiting for orders" and to organise local government bodies (read: of landlords and capitalists) as "elements of the future provisional government."

There is method in this madness. The very thing the bourgeoisie desires is that power should be transferred to their hands peacefully, *without popular rebellion*, which may perhaps be victorious and result in the establishment of a republic and real liberties, arm the proletariat and rouse the millions of the peasantry. The very thing the treacherous bourgeoisie requires in order to be able to come to an understanding with the Tsar (a monarchy with an Upper Chamber) against the "mob" is that the slogan of rebellion should be withdrawn or that it should be explained away, that others should be urged to oppose it and that the advice be given that, as a "prologue," organs of self-government (accessible only to Trubetskoy, Petrunkevitch, Feodorov and Co.),<sup>114</sup> be immediately set up. Consequently the Liberals express the inmost

thoughts of the money-bags and their most profound interests.

The stupid utopianism of *Iskra* merely expresses the half-finished thoughts of a section of the Social-Democrats and their deviation from the only revolutionary tactics of the proletariat, viz.: the ruthless exposure of the bourgeois opportunist illusion that peaceful concessions are possible from Tsarism, that self-government can be established without overthrowing autocracy and that the people can elect their deputies without the prologue of rebellion. We must clearly and resolutely point out the necessity for rebellion in the present state of affairs; we must directly call for rebellion (without, of course, fixing the date beforehand) and call for the immediate organisation of a revolutionary army. Only such a bold and wide organisation of such an army can serve as a prologue of rebellion. Only rebellion can guarantee the victory of the revolution, and, of course, those who know the local conditions will always utter a warning against attempts at premature rebellions. Real popular organisations and real self-government can serve only as the epilogue of a victorious rebellion.

*Proletarii*, No. 12, August 3rd, 1905.

**O**N 6th August the electoral law and the order establishing the Duma were promulgated. The parties and groups had now to define their attitude towards this great event, namely, the introduction in Russia of a constitutional regime; inadequate though it was, it was the material affirmation of the first defeat of absolutism.

Social-Democracy was divided on the question of the tactics to be followed. While the Bolsheviks, inspired by the *Proletarii*, applauded the policy of boycott accompanied by active and concrete preparations for insurrection, the Mensheviks revealed a tendency to confound the essential objective with the election of the organs of revolutionary self-government. No. 10 of *Iskra*, of 10th September, contained an article entitled *Social-Democracy and the Duma*, in which Parvus developed a plan according to which Social-Democracy would participate in the elections and secure the return of socialist candidates by means of alliances with classes enjoying the right to vote. This article not only distorted the Social-Democratic tactics by giving them a purely parliamentary direction, when no real parliamentarism existed, but it also created extreme confusion, for while favouring these alliances with the more or less Liberal bourgeoisie, it saw in popular insurrection the sole means of "compelling the government to change the franchise law and extend the rights of the Duma," and advised the penetration into election meetings by force.

Lenin considered it necessary, therefore, before subjecting this view to more detailed criticism (which, however, appeared in the same number of *Proletarii*), to make the issue more clear by using parallel columns as on the following pages. It should be mentioned that the opinions attributed therein to *Iskra* belong speci-

ally to Parvus, who, as Lenin himself remarks, gave himself the air of a "superman" standing above the two fractions of the party. Martov informs us, in his *History of Social-Democracy*, that Parvus had no success among the Mensheviks.

## *ARGUE ABOUT TACTICS, BUT GIVE CLEAR SLOGANS!"*

The discussion concerning the tactics to be adopted towards the Duma is becoming more and more heated. The differences between *Iskra* and *Proletarii* are becoming increasingly acute,<sup>114</sup> particularly since Parvus's article appeared in *Iskra*.

It is necessary to argue about tactics, but in doing so it is absolutely necessary to obtain complete clarity. Questions of tactics are questions of the political conduct of the Party. The conduct of the Party can and should be based on theory, on historical references and on an analysis of the whole political situation. But the Party of the class which is carrying on a fight must never, in the midst of discussions, lose sight of the necessity of giving absolutely clear replies *which do not permit of more than one interpretation* to the concrete questions of our political conduct. It must say "yes" or "no" to the question of whether we shall do this or the other at any particular moment.

It is necessary to make these clear replies, not only in order to prevent the differences from becoming exaggerated or confused, but in order that the working class may understand perfectly the nature of the concrete advice which social-democrats give them at any given moment.

For the purpose of introducing absolute clarity into our controversy with *Iskra*, we have drawn

up the following list of concrete questions concerning the conduct of Social-Democrats in the present Duma agitation campaign. We do not claim that this list is exhaustive, and we shall be glad of any suggestions for adding questions, changing some, or regrouping others. It goes without saying that what is said here concerning electoral meetings apply to meetings generally.

THE ADVICE GIVEN BY SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS TO THE PROLETARIAT IN CONNECTION WITH THE DUMA

*Iskra Proletarii*

(1) Should workers endeavour to gain entry to the electoral meetings?	Yes	Yes
(2) Should the workers endeavour to gain entry to the electoral meetings even by force?	Yes	Yes
(3) Should speeches be made at these meetings condemning the Duma as utterly worthless and explaining all the aims and the programme of Social-Democracy?	Yes	Yes
(4) Should speeches be made at these meetings calling the workers and the whole people to armed rebellion, to the formation of a revolutionary army and of a		

provisional revolutionary government?	? <sup>117</sup>	Yes
(5) Shall we make these slogans (as in point 4) the central point of the whole of our Duma campaign?	No	Yes <sup>118</sup>
(6) Shall the Osvobozhdentsy (or Constitutional Democrats) who go into the Duma be denounced as bourgeois traitors who have come to an agreement with the Tsar?	No	Yes
(7) Shall Social-Democrats advise the workers that it is more preferable to elect the Petrunkevitches than the Stakhovitches <sup>119</sup> etc. to the Duma?	Yes	No
(8) Shall we conclude any kind of agreement with the Osvobozhdentsy to support the latter under certain conditions, demands, obligations etc.?	Yes	No
(9) Shall we make the slogan "revolutionary self-government" the central point of our agitation?	Yes	No

(10) Shall we call upon the people immediately to elect, on the basis of universal suffrage, the organs of revolutionary self-government and through them the Constituent Assembly? Yes No

(11) Shall we elect Social-Democratic electoral Committees? Shall we put up social-democratic candidates for the Duma? Yes No

*Proletarii*, No. 18, September 13th, 1905.

OWING to the confusion among the authorities during the month of September, Russian democracy was able to secure actual freedom of assembly, freedom of association, free speech and free press. Meetings were held in the halls of the universities which, on the 27th August, had been given a certain degree of autonomy; pamphlets, which only a few weeks before had been objects of prosecution, were publicly sold or began to be printed in Russia itself without waiting for any authorisation; the workers formed trade unions.

From now on the Bolsheviks conceived the idea of a big daily newspaper to appear legally and to complete within Russia the work of *Proletarii* in Geneva. Over the names of radical but non-party writers, it was possible also to circulate articles written by Bolsheviks. The writers, overwhelmed by the revolutionary current, readily lent themselves to this association. At last, after several delays, the newspaper made its appearance at St. Petersburg on 27th October, 1905, under the name of *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*).

Every concession made by the Government seemed only to have the effect of reinforcing the revolution. On September 19th a strike, purely economic at first, had broken out in a printing press in Moscow; it received the immediate support of a wide movement both in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In St. Petersburg a conference was called by the authorities to discuss the question of pension funds for the railway employees; suddenly it declared itself to be the industrial and political organisation of all the railwaymen in Russia (20th September). The rumour spread in Moscow that several members of this conference had been arrested. The rumour was unfounded; nevertheless, on 7th

October a railway strike began, which, spreading from station to station and from line to line, very soon reached the Caucasus and Turkestan, and by 17th of October became national. Everywhere, workers and staffs, students, even lawyers, doctors and judges struck work in solidarity or by impulse. The strike was general throughout the Empire. The two capitals found themselves isolated, and the difficulty of obtaining food began to be felt. On 17th October the Tsar issued a manifesto guaranteeing the civil liberties already taken by the people, and changing the consultative Bulygin Duma into a Legislative Chamber elected on a wider franchise.

In the midst of the strike the workers experienced an acute need for organisation. In St. Petersburg on the 13th of October, delegates from various factories had called upon the proletariat to join in the general strike for the freedom and happiness of the people, and regularly to elect their deputies to a workers' committee charged to defend their interests, to co-ordinate the movements and to carry on the strike.

On October 17th the assembled workers' delegates took the name of "Soviet." The Soviet held its sessions, published its organ (*Izvestia*), submitted its demands to the Government and, after the termination of the strike on 21st of October, proclaimed the eight-hour day. On November 2nd a second general strike broke out in St. Petersburg in support of the seamen who had mutinied in Kronstadt, and in protest against the martial law proclaimed in Poland. By this time the factory owners and the Government had recovered from their fright, and they retaliated with a lock-out. The Soviet had to fall back, but it fell back calling on the workers to organise and to establish connections with the revolutionary peasants, the Army and Navy in readiness for more decisive struggles in the future.

Such was the lightning speed at which events moved.

The Soviet had formed itself as the representative organ of all the workers, and therefore, formally, was neutral in its relation to the parties. For this reason they, and particularly the Bolsheviks, who had carried the idea of the Party to its highest point, harboured a certain mistrust towards the Soviet. The Mensheviks—in spite of their theories on the initiative of the masses and revolutionary self-government, of which indeed the Soviet seemed to be a realisation, as brilliant as it was unexpected—would not have been displeased to see it define its political character. Thus the Federal Council of the Social-Democratic Party (in which the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks had been grouped for some time already) on October 29th raised the question of the Soviet accepting the Social-Democratic programme. This created the risk of causing strife among the proletariat in the midst of revolutionary action. Fortunately the majority of the deputies, though Social-Democrats or sympathisers, refused to open the debate. None the less, the question continued to make trouble in the organisations and to be discussed in the press and at meetings. Only after Lenin's arrival between the 12th or 14th of November was the Soviet recognised as the fighting organ of the working class without distinction of party.

The Soviet and its Executive Committee included, in addition to workers' deputies (the two wings of the Social-Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries), the representatives of the workers' parties, three for each fraction, with consultative votes. In addition to its *ex-officio* delegates, the Social-Democratic Party had enough members and sympathisers in the Soviet to assure it a preponderating influence. The more the movement advanced, the greater was this influence.

The progress and the expansion of the workers' movement, however, had given rise to some other tendencies.

Since 1903, Anarchist groups had appeared in Russia, particularly in the West and in the Ukraine. From 1905 onwards the Anarchists also became active in Moscow, Riga and St. Petersburg. They published journals and proclamations and spoke at meetings. They played an important part in some strikes. The most widespread tendency among them was that which drew its inspiration from the review of Kropotkin, *Khleb i Volya* (*Bread and Freedom*), published at Geneva. However, in October there appeared in St. Petersburg a group of Anarchist-Communists, who preached general terror, expropriation and looting of shops under the name of direct action. The group had a printing press and a stock of explosives for the manufacture of bombs. It is difficult to say whether it was this group or some other which, in November, 1905, demanded the admission of its representatives to the Soviet and its Executive Committee on the same footing as that of the representatives of other revolutionary organisations.

The Executive Committee of the Soviet rejected this demand. It justified its action on purely formal grounds, namely, the tradition of the First International and the fact that Anarchists did not form parties.

Lenin had just then broken with the decadent literateurs who formed half of the editorial staff of the *Novaya Zhizn*. He had transformed this journal into a purely Bolshevik organ—No. 21 was the first to carry the slogan "Proletarians of all Countries, Unite" and the sub-title, "Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Russia." He took advantage of the occasion which offered itself to define his idea of the Soviet, which differed from that of many other members of the party.

## *SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM.*<sup>120</sup>

Yesterday, November 23rd, the Executive Committee of the Council of Workers' Deputies rejected the application of the Anarchists for representation on the Council. The Executive Committee gave the following reasons for rejecting the application: (1) in international practice, Anarchists have no representation on congresses and socialist conferences because they do not recognise the political struggle as a means for the achievement of their ideals;<sup>121</sup> (2) only parties can be represented and the Anarchists do not represent a party.

We consider the decision of the Executive Committee to be absolutely right and to be of enormous importance from the point of view of principle and of practical politics. If the Council of Workers' Deputies be regarded as a parliament of workers, or as a sort of proletarian organ of government,<sup>122</sup> then of course, it would have been wrong to reject the application of the Anarchists. However insignificant may be the influence of the Anarchists among the workers (fortunately), nevertheless a number of workers undoubtedly support them. The question as to whether the Anarchists represent a party, an organisation, a group, or a voluntary association of people of the same ideas is a question of formality, which is of no importance from the point of view of principle. Finally, if the Anarchists, while rejecting the political struggle, apply for representation

in an institution which is conducting the political struggle, it is a glaring inconsistency which merely shows how weak are the philosophy and tactics of the Anarchists. But this cannot serve as a reason for excluding them from a parliament or an administrative body.

It seems to us that the decision of the Executive Committee is absolutely correct and does not in the least contradict the functions, the character and the composition of this body. The Council of Workers' Deputies is not a workers' parliament and not a workers' administrative body. It is not an administrative body at all, but a fighting organisation for the achievement of definite aims.

This fighting organisation consists of representatives of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (the Party of proletarian socialism), of the Social Revolutionary Party (the representatives of petty bourgeois socialism or the extreme left-wing of revolutionary bourgeois democracy) and many non-party workers who have joined together on the basis of a provisional, undefined, fighting agreement. The non-party workers referred to are not non-party in the general sense of the term, but revolutionaries who do not belong to any particular party but whose sympathies are entirely on the side of the revolution, for the victory of which they fight with devoted enthusiasm, energy and self-sacrifice. For that reason it will be quite natural

to include in the Executive Committee representatives of the revolutionary peasantry also.<sup>123</sup>

As a matter of fact, the Council of Workers' Deputies represents an undefined, extensive, fighting alliance of socialists and revolutionary democrats, in which, of course, the non-party revolutionaries represent various shades, ranging from the former to the latter. Such an organisation is obviously necessary for the purpose of conducting political strikes and other more active forms of the struggle for immediate democratic demands which have been accepted and approved by the overwhelming majority of the population. To have Anarchists in an organisation like this will not be an advantage, but a disadvantage. They will simply introduce disruption into it. They will weaken the force of its attack. They will begin to argue about whether political reform is essential. The exclusion of Anarchists from this fighting league, which, as it were, is carrying out our democratic revolution, is quite necessary from the point of view and in the interests of this revolution. There can be place in a fighting union only for those who fight for the aim of the union. If, for example, the Cadets or the Party of Law and Order<sup>124</sup> managed to recruit several hundred workers in its St. Petersburg branch, the Executive Committee of the Council of Workers' Deputies would hardly for that reason open its doors to these organisations.

In explaining the reasons for adopting this

decision the Executive Committee refers to the practice of international socialist congresses. We warmly welcome this statement as a recognition of the intellectual leadership of international social-democracy on the part of the St. Petersburg Council of Workers' Deputies. The Russian revolution has already acquired international significance. The opponents of the revolution in Russia are already conspiring against free Russia with Wilhelm II. and all other obscurantists, tyrants, freebooters and exploiters in Europe.<sup>125</sup> Nor shall we forget that the complete victory of our revolution demands the alliance of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia with the socialist workers of all countries.

International socialist congresses have passed resolutions against permitting Anarchists to take part in them, and with good reason. A wide gulf exists between socialism and anarchism, and in vain do the *agents provocateurs* of the secret police and the servile literary hacks of reactionary governments pretend that this gulf does not exist. The philosophy of the Anarchists is bourgeois philosophy turned the other way round. Their individualist theories and their individualist ideals represent the direct opposite of socialism. Their views express not the future of bourgeois society, which is irresistibly being driven towards socialised labour, but the present bourgeois society and even the past, with the domination of blind chance over scattered, isolated small producers. Their tactics amount to the negation

of the political struggle, they serve to disunite the proletarians and, in fact, to convert them into passive participants in bourgeois politics; for the workers cannot detach themselves from politics.

In the present Russian revolution, the task of organising, politically educating, training and rallying the forces of the working class comes to the forefront more than at any other time. The more outrageous the conduct of the reactionary government, the more zealously its *agents provocateurs* strive to rouse sordid passions among the ignorant masses, the more desperately the defenders of the decaying autocracy clutch at every opportunity to discredit the revolution by organising pogroms, riots, plunder and assassination and by intoxicating the rabble,<sup>126</sup> the more imperatively does this task impose itself primarily upon the party of the socialist proletariat. For that reason we will utilise every means of the intellectual struggle to confine the influence of the Anarchists over the Russian workers within its present insignificant limits.

*Novaya Zhizn*, No. 21, November 25th, 1905.

THE St. Petersburg Soviet was not the only one that was set up. In the course of October and November similar Soviets of Workers' Deputies came spontaneously into existence in the majority of the important centres of Russia, namely, Moscow, Rostov, Kiev, Odessa, Novorossisk and even Krasnoyarsk and Chita in Eastern Siberia.

At the same time, associations of a purely industrial character multiplied, as, for example, factory councils and labour unions. In October-November there were in St. Petersburg 44 unions comprising 35,000 workers, and in Moscow 50 unions comprising 26,000 workers. On November 6th, 1905, the St. Petersburg Central Bureau of the Labour Unions was established.

The Soviets were the organs which directed all the action of the proletariat, industrial as well as political, prepared the insurrection and for some time fulfilled the rôle of a second government. Generally speaking, the Soviets consisted of the representatives of the most advanced industrial workers. The unions were purely industrial organisations with limited objectives, though often forced by circumstances to go beyond them.

Both, however, had one feature in common: they were politically neutral; members of various parties belonged to them, but, as organisations, they did not adhere to the programme of any party. It has been stated already that the attempt of the Social-Democratic Party to induce the St. Petersburg Soviet to adopt its programme proved unsuccessful. The unions also, after September 17th, adopted the principle of political neutrality.

Hence, the question arose of the attitude of the

various parties towards these non-party organisations. The question was very anxiously debated among the social-democrats. Lenin dealt with the question in the following article, which appeared in two numbers of the *Novaya Zhizn*.

## *THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE NON-PARTY REVOLUTIONARIES<sup>127</sup>*

### I.

The revolutionary movement in Russia is rapidly spreading to new sections of the population; it is giving rise to a number of non-party organisations. The more the movement is oppressed and persecuted, the more does the need for organisation assert itself. Organisations of indefinite form constantly arise and their characters are extremely original. They have no sharply defined limits as have organisations in Europe. Trade unions assume a political character. The political struggle merges with the economic struggle, for example during strikes, and this gives rise to temporary or more or less permanent organisations of mixed forms.<sup>128</sup>

What is the significance of this phenomenon and what should be the attitude of Social-Democrats towards it?

Strict Party organisation is the accompaniment and result of a highly developed class struggle. On the other hand, the development of strict Party organisation is essential in the interests of the open and extensive class struggle. For that reason the Party of the class conscious proletariat, Social-Democracy, quite legitimately always combats non-partyism and steadily works in the direction of establishing a Social-Democratic Labour Party, organisationally compact and consistent in prin-

ciple. This work becomes increasingly successful among the masses as the development of capitalism more and more splits up the people into classes and causes the antagonisms between them to become more acute.

It is quite natural that the present revolution in Russia should have given rise and now gives rise to so many non-party organisations. This revolution is a democratic revolution, *i.e.*, it is bourgeois in its social and economic substance. This revolution will overthrow the autocratic feudal system and clear the path of development for the bourgeois system, and thus fulfil the needs of all classes of bourgeois society. In this sense it is a people's revolution. This does not mean, of course, that our revolution is not a class revolution. Of course not. But it is directed against classes and castes which have become obsolete from the point of view of bourgeois society, which are alien to that society and hinder its development. As the whole economic life of the country, in its main features, has become bourgeois, as the overwhelming majority of the population already lives under bourgeois conditions, the anti-revolutionary elements are extremely small in number and, indeed, are only a handful as compared with the people. Consequently, the class character of the bourgeois revolution inevitably reveals itself in what appears at first sight as a people's non-class struggle of all classes of bourgeois society against absolutism and feudalism.

The period of the bourgeois revolution in Russia, as in other countries, is marked by the relatively undeveloped state of the class antagonisms peculiar to capitalist society. It is true that capitalism in Russia at the present time is more highly developed than it was in Germany<sup>129</sup> in 1848, and certainly more highly developed than in France in 1789. But there is not the slightest doubt that in Russia purely capitalist antagonisms are to a considerable degree screened from view by the antagonisms between "culture" and Asiatic barbarism,<sup>130</sup> Europeanism and Tartarism, capitalism and feudalism, *i.e.*, such demands are brought to the forefront, the fulfilment of which will develop capitalism, cleanse it of the slag of feudalism and improve the conditions of life and of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Indeed, if we examine the petitions and complaints which are drawn up in infinite number in every factory, office, regiment, police force, bishopric, educational establishment etc. in Russia at the present time, we will see that the overwhelming majority of them contain purely cultural, if one may call them so, demands.<sup>131</sup> What I want to say is that they are not specifically class demands, but demands for elementary rights, demands which will not destroy capitalism but, on the contrary, will bring it within the bounds of Europeanism, which will relieve capitalism of barbarity, savagery, bribery and other Russian survivals of serfdom. In

fact, even proletarian demands, in the majority of cases, are limited to reforms which are fully realisable under capitalism. The Russian proletariat demands now and immediately, not that which will undermine capitalism, but that which will clear the path of its development and accelerate it.

It goes without saying that the special position which the proletariat occupies in capitalist society results in that the striving of the workers towards socialism, their alliance with the socialist party, asserts itself with elemental force at the earliest stage of development of the movement. But purely socialist demands are still a matter of the future—the demands of the day are democratic demands in politics and demands possible of fulfilment under capitalism in economics. Even the proletariat is making the revolution within the limits of the minimum programme, as it were, and not of the maximum programme. As for the peasantry, the overwhelming mass of the population, this goes without saying. Its "maximum programme," its ultimate aims do not extend beyond the limits of capitalism, which will develop more extensively and prosperously when the land is transferred to the whole of the peasantry and to the whole of the people. At the present time, the peasant revolution is a bourgeois revolution, however much such a statement may offend the sentimental ears of our sentimental knights of petty bourgeois socialism.<sup>132</sup>

The character of the revolution now proceed-

ing as described above naturally gives rise to non-party organisations. The whole movement, therefore, on the surface inevitably acquires the stamp of non-party, but only on the surface, of course. The need for a human, cultural life, the need for organising in defence of human dignity, human rights and citizenship embraces all, combines all classes, overflows the bounds of all parties and shakes up people who as yet are far from being able to rise to the level of becoming party men. The urgency of immediate, elementary, essential rights and reforms removed to the background, as it were, all thought and considerations concerning the future. Being absorbed in the struggle that is now proceeding, which absorption is quite necessary and legitimate, for without it success in the struggle could not be obtained, people are inclined to idealise these immediate, elementary aims, to picture them in rosy colours and sometimes even to clothe them in fantastic garb. Simple democracy, humdrum bourgeois democracy, is regarded as socialism and is described as such. Everything seems to be non-party; everything seems to merge into a single movement for liberation (in fact, liberation of bourgeois society); everything acquires a faint tinge of socialism, particularly as a result of the leading part played by the socialist proletariat in the democratic struggle.

Under such circumstances, the non-party idea cannot but gain temporary supremacy. The non-

party slogan cannot but become a fashionable slogan, for fashion helplessly drags at the tail of life, and non-party organisation appears to be the most common phenomenon on the surface of political life. Non-party democracy, non-party strikes, non-party revolutionaries—all these appear to be the fashion of the day.

The question now arises: what should be the attitude of the representatives and adherents of various classes towards this fact and idea of non-partyism? We do not mean the personal attitude of each individual, but the attitude that is inevitably dictated by the interests and the points of view of various classes.

## II.

As we have already shown, the non-party idea is brought into being by, or, if you will, is the expression of, the bourgeois character of our revolution. The bourgeoisie cannot help inclining towards the non-party idea, for the absence of parties among those who are fighting for the liberation of bourgeois society implies that no fresh struggle will arise against bourgeois society itself. Those who carry on a non-party struggle for liberty either do not understand the bourgeois character of liberty, or they sanctify the bourgeois system or else postpone the struggle against it or the struggle to perfect it to the Greek Kalends. On the other hand, those who consciously or unconsciously stand for

the bourgeois system cannot help being carried away by the idea of non-partyism.

In a society based upon classes, the fight between the hostile classes must, at a certain stage of its development, become a political struggle. The most complete and formulated expression of the political struggle of classes is the struggle between parties. Non-partyism means indifference towards the struggle of parties. This indifference is not mere neutrality, not mere abstention from the struggle. There can be no neutrals and no abstainers in the class struggle, for it is impossible in capitalist society to abstain from taking part in the exchange of commodities or in the sale of labour power. Exchange inevitably gives rise to economic struggle and subsequently to political struggle. Indifference to the struggle, therefore, does not mean standing above the battle, abstaining from it or being neutral. Indifference is tacit support to the strong and to the rulers. Those who in Russia were indifferent towards the autocracy prior to its fall during the October Revolution tacitly supported the autocracy. Those who in modern Europe are indifferent towards the bourgeoisie tacitly support the bourgeoisie. Those who are indifferent towards the idea of the bourgeois character of the struggle for liberty tacitly support the domination of the bourgeoisie in the struggle; they support the domination of the bourgeoisie in rising, free Russia. Political indifference is political contentedness. A well-fed

man is indifferent to a crust of bread, a hungry man will always be a party man on the bread question. To be indifferent to a crust of bread does not mean that the man does not need bread, but that the man is always sure of his bread, that he is never in need of bread and that he has firmly attached himself to the party of the well-fed. To be non-party in bourgeois society is merely a hypocritical, concealed, passive expression of membership of the party of the well-fed, of the party of the rulers and exploiters.

The non-party idea is a bourgeois idea. The party idea is a socialist idea. This postulate, taken as a whole, is applicable to every bourgeois society. One must be able, of course, to make this general truism fit separate questions and separate cases, but to forget it at a time when the whole of bourgeois society is rising in revolt against serfdom and absolutism means to abstain altogether from socialist criticism of bourgeois society.

In spite of the fact that it is still at the beginning of its development, the Russian revolution has already provided not a little material which confirms the general arguments here outlined. Only the Social-Democratic Party, the party of the class-conscious proletariat, has always insisted and now insists upon strict partyism. Our Liberals, the representatives of the views of the bourgeoisie, cannot tolerate the socialist principle of party and refuse to listen to anything about the class struggle. It is

sufficient to recall the recent speeches delivered by Rodichiev, which for the hundredth time repeated what has been said over and over again by the *Osvobozhdenye*, which is published abroad, as well as by the innumerable vassal organs of Russian Liberalism.<sup>133</sup> Finally, the ideology of the intermediate class, the petty bourgeoisie, was clearly expressed in the views of the Russian radicals of all shades from *Nasha Zhizn* (*Our Life*) to the Social Revolutionaries.<sup>134</sup> The way in which the latter confuse socialism with democracy is clearly observed on the agrarian question in their slogan of "socialisation" (of the land without socialising capital). As is well known, those who are tolerant towards bourgeois radicalism are intolerant towards the idea of Social-Democratic partyism.

The examination of how the interests of various classes are reflected in the programme and tactics of Russian Liberals and Radicals of all shades does not enter into our subject. We have touched upon this interesting question only in passing; let us now endeavour to draw the practical political conclusions concerning the attitude of our Party towards non-party organisations.

Should socialists belong to non-party organisations? If they should, under what conditions? What tactics should be carried out in these organisations?

The first question cannot be answered in the absolute negative. It would be incorrect to say that

under no circumstances should Social-Democrats join non-party (*i.e.*, more or less conscious or unconscious bourgeois) organisations.<sup>133</sup> In the period of democratic revolution, to remain outside of non-party organisations would under certain circumstances be tantamount to abstaining from participation in the democratic revolution. Without a doubt, however, socialists must confine these "certain circumstances" to narrow limits; they may participate in such organisations only under strictly defined and limited conditions. For while non-party organisations, as we have already said, arise as the result of the relatively undeveloped state of the class struggle, on the other hand, strict partyism is one of the factors which make the class struggle conscious, clear and definite and a struggle for principle.

It is the constant, immutable and absolute duty of socialists to preserve the ideological and political independence of the party of the proletariat. Those who fail to fulfil this duty cease to be socialists *in fact*, however sincere their socialist (in words) convictions may be. Socialists may belong to non-party organisations only in exceptional cases, and the purpose, character and conditions of this membership should be wholly subordinated to the fundamental tasks, viz., the training and organisation of the socialist proletariat for the conscious leadership of the social revolution.

Circumstances may compel us to join non-party

organisations—especially in the period of democratic revolution, and particularly during a democratic revolution in which the proletariat is playing a prominent part. Joining such organisations may be necessary, for example, for the purpose of enabling socialism to be preached to a vaguely democratic audience, or for the purpose of organising the joint struggle of socialists and revolutionary democrats against the counter-revolution. In the first case, membership of such organisations will serve as a means of propagating our ideas; in the second case, it will represent a fighting agreement for the purpose of achieving definite revolutionary aims. In both cases, membership can only be temporary. In both cases, it is permissible only on condition that the independence of the workers' Party is preserved and that the Party as a whole maintains control over its delegates, Party members and groups in the non-party leagues and councils.<sup>136</sup>

When the activities of our Party were conducted secretly it was extremely difficult, and sometimes almost impossible, to maintain such control. Now, however, when the activities of our Party are becoming more and more open,<sup>137</sup> this control and guidance can be, and should be, carried out in the most extensive manner, not only by the higher bodies of the Party, but by the rank and file, by the whole of the workers organised by and belonging to our Party. It should become the practice in our Party for reports to be made of the conduct of Social-

Democrats in non-party unions and councils; lectures should be delivered on the conditions and tasks of such activity, and the various Party organisations should pass judgment, in the form of resolutions, on these activities. Only when the Party as a whole takes part in this real manner in the guidance of such activities can truly socialist work be contrasted with general democratic work."<sup>12</sup>

What tactics must we conduct in the non-party leagues? First of all, we must take advantage of every opportunity to establish independent contacts and to advocate the whole of our socialist programme. Secondly, we must define the immediate political tasks of the day from the point of view of the fullest and most determined accomplishment of the democratic revolution; we must provide the political slogans for the democratic revolution, put forward a programme of reforms which must be carried out by the fighting revolutionary democracy as distinguished from compromising Liberal democracy.

Only if the work is arranged in this way will it be permissible and productive of good results for members of our Party to belong to non-party revolutionary organisations which are organised one day by the workers, another by the peasantry, another day by the soldiers, etc. Only if the work is arranged in this way will we be in a position to fulfil the twofold task of the workers' Party in the bourgeois revolution, namely, to carry the demo-

cratic revolution to its logical conclusion and increase and strengthen the ranks of the socialist proletariat, who must have freedom in order to carry on a ruthless struggle for the overthrow of the domination of capitalism.

*Novaya Zhizn*, Nos. 26 and 27, November and December, 1905.

**I**N the middle of November, the revolution entered its decisive phase. The whole Empire was involved. In the interior the peasants drove out the landlords and seized their lands. In the Army and Navy a succession of mutinies broke out, as, for example, at Kronstadt, Sebastopol, Kharkov and other places. In the frontier provinces of Poland, Finland and Caucasus the oppressed nationalities strove to shake off the Russian yoke.

On November 23rd, the St. Petersburg Soviet called upon the workers and the whole of the poor population to withdraw their deposits from the savings banks. On December 1st, in agreement with all the revolutionary organisations, it issued a manifesto, known as the "Financial Manifesto." Its appeal was somewhat along these lines: the Government is heading towards bankruptcy—the disaster can be avoided only by overthrowing the Government—the best way to do this is to strike at its finances—therefore, refuse to pay taxes and peasant dues, demand the payment of wages and salaries in gold, withdraw deposits from wherever they may be.

The Government, on its part, thought the time had come to act. The labour aristocracy, which had taken part in the strikes of October and November, was already weary. The major part of the army had not supported the mutineers. The peasantry remained isolated from both the towns and the troops. Liberal "society," frightened by the revolution and already content with the concessions made, inclined to the side of the Government, as was shown by the discussion in the last Zemstvo Congress (November 6th-13th).

Martial law was then declared in the provinces where the agrarian movement had been most violent. The

press was subjected to the arbitrary control of the governors (newspapers which, like the *Novaya Zhizn*, had published the "Financial Manifesto" were confiscated and suppressed the same day). Strikes in the public services were declared to be a crime liable to a penalty of four years' imprisonment. Finally, on December 3rd, the Executive Committee of the Soviet was arrested.

The workers retaliated to this by declaring a general strike on December 8th. The strike extended to thirty-three towns, and included most of the railways. At some places, especially in Moscow, it almost immediately developed into insurrection—a war between the people and the authorities. On December 10th Moscow was covered with barricades, spontaneously erected. The governor, Dubassov, brought out the artillery and the dependable troops. Nevertheless, the fight lasted till the 17th. Finally the rebels were crushed. They had not been actively supported by the fatigued proletariat of Petersburg.<sup>189</sup>

On 17th December the insurrection was crushed in the Donetz, and on the 21st at Rostov; on the 25th the Republic of Novorossisk, which had held power since the 12th, also ceased to exist. By the end of December even the strikes had everywhere come to an end.

The defeat of the revolution was certain. In order definitely to win over the Liberals, the Government, on 11th December, at the beginning of the strike, passed a new electoral law which made relatively liberal changes in the earlier law of 6th August. For example, in addition to the three electoral colleges for the landed proprietors, the peasants and the town dwellers, a workers' electoral college was established. But it was mainly the petty and the middle bourgeoisie of the

towns who gained considerably in voting power (more than tenfold, according to some calculations). Giving with one hand to the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals, the Government could with the other strike hard at the workers and the revolutionary peasants. Thus, punitive expeditions under ruthless commanders traversed Russia, filled up the jails, shot the "ring-leaders," closed down the trade unions, destroyed the workers' printing presses and supported the "Black Hundreds" in their pogroms.

On 12th February the announcement was made that the Duma would be convened on 27th April. On the 20th, a law was passed defining the constitution of Parliament: there were to be two Chambers: the Duma to function again almost exclusively as a consultative body, and the bureaucratic Council of State. The electoral campaign started at the end of the month.

This situation gave rise to several questions which the Social Democrats had to settle. The repressive regime had put their organisations through a very hard test; these latter were now reduced to a completely illegal existence. The re-establishment of unity was felt—especially by the workers—to be an urgent necessity. With a view to bringing about unity a Central Committee had been formed by conferences held during November. The Committee busied itself with the convocation of a unity Congress. But the question of the attitude towards the Duma still separated the two factions.

What attitude should be taken towards the Duma as defined by the *ukase* of 11th December? The Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks agreed, as Lenin remarks, that this Duma was "a miserable counterfeit of popular representation, and that it was necessary to combat this

fraud and to prepare for an insurrection to bring about the convocation of a Constituent Assembly elected by the whole people." But the former held that the party ought to participate at least in the two first stages of the elections, because, after the December defeat, the Duma would be the rallying centre of the Opposition elements and a means of popular training in politics. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, at a conference held at Tammerfors in Finland in the middle of December, at the very height of the Moscow insurrection, decided not to participate in any stage of the elections but to gain entrance to the election meetings, legally or otherwise, in order to expound the socialist programme.

This discussion about the Duma contributed towards the revival of the Party organisations. It further gave rise to another discussion, namely, on how to judge the situation and what lessons to draw for the future from the passing events? The Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks were agreed that the revolution had come to a temporary halt, but would gather momentum for a new advance. However, the former concluded from the defeat sustained that it was necessary to pay greater attention to the bourgeois Opposition and again to take up legal activities among the existing trade unions. The Bolsheviks, however, formulated their tactics directly in the terms of the December rising.

Since the suppression of the Bolshevik organ, *Novaya Zhizn*, and of the Menshevik daily, *Natchalo* (*Beginning*), on December 2nd, 1905, the Social Democratic Party had ceased to possess any legal organ. Apart from the two periodicals, it was reduced to issuing leaflets and illegal publications. The *Izvestia* (*News*) of the Party, in which the following article appeared,

was an illegal sheet, jointly edited by the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, published at irregular intervals for the purpose of discussing the questions on the agenda of the forthcoming unity Congress. The first number appeared on 7th February, 1906.

## *THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT<sup>140</sup>*

### I.

What is the position with regard to the democratic revolution in Russia? Has it been crushed or has a temporary calm set in? Was the December revolt the culminating point of the revolution, and are we unrestrainedly sliding down towards a Shipov Constitutional regime?<sup>141</sup> Or, on the contrary, is the revolutionary movement as a whole not abating but continuing to rise, making preparations for a fresh outbreak, accumulating fresh forces in the calm, foreshadowing, after the unsuccessful first rebellion, the outbreak of a second which will have ever so many more chances of success than the first?

These are the fundamental questions which now confront Russian Social-Democracy. Remaining true to Marxism, we cannot, and should not, by uttering general phrases, evade an analysis of the objective conditions, which ultimately will fully answer these questions. On the answers to these questions depend the tactics of Social-Democracy, and our controversies, over the question, for example, of the boycott of the Duma (which, by the way, is now coming to an end, for the majority of the branches of the R.S.D.L.P. have voted in favour of the boycott),<sup>142</sup> are only a minute part of these great questions.

We have just said that it would be improper for

a Marxist to evade these questions by uttering general phrases; as, for example, that we have never conceived the revolution as a fight with "pitchforks and scythes," that we were revolutionaries even when we did not make the direct appeal for insurrection,<sup>143</sup> and that we will remain revolutionaries also in the parliamentary period, when it arrives, etc.<sup>144</sup> Such speeches would be pitiful evasions, a substitution of the concrete historical question by abstract reasoning which explains absolutely nothing and serves but to conceal intellectual poverty or political consternation.

In order to illustrate our idea we will mention the attitude of Marx towards the German revolution of 1848. This reference will be the more useful for the reason that symptoms are observed among us of a similar and even of a sharper division of the bourgeoisie into a reactionary section and a revolutionary section, a division which was lacking in the great French revolution, for example. The fundamental questions we have raised above concerning the state of the Russian revolution may be formulated by an analogy with Germany (in the conventional and limited sense of course in which all historical analogies may be made) expressed in the question: 1847 or 1849? Are we at the present time (as was the case in Germany in 1847, when the German Duma, the so-called United Landtag, was convened) at the crest of the highest wave of the revolution, or are we (as in Germany in 1849)

in the trough, at the final exhaustion of the revolution and the beginning of a drab, humdrum, limited constitution?<sup>145</sup>

In raising this question in 1850 Marx answered it not by an evasion but by a direct reply which followed logically from an analysis of the objective conditions. In 1849 the revolution was suppressed, a number of rebellions which broke out proved unsuccessful. The gains achieved by the people were afterwards lost; reaction raged against the revolutionaries. Open political action of the Communist League (the social-democratic organisation of that time, led by Marx)<sup>146</sup> became impossible. "Every where the need arose," it was stated in a circular issued to the members by the Central Committee of the League in March, 1850,<sup>147</sup> "for a strong, *secret* organisation of the revolutionary party all over Germany." (Italics ours.) The Central Committee sent an emissary to Germany to concentrate "all the useful forces in the hands of the League."<sup>148</sup> Marx wrote (in the *Circular* of March, 1850) of the probability of a fresh revival, of a fresh revolution; he advised the workers to organise independently, he particularly insisted on the necessity for the arming of the whole of the proletariat, upon the necessity for forming a proletarian guard and upon the necessity to "defeat every attempt to disarm the workers by force." Marx demanded the establishment of "revolutionary workers' governments" and discussed the conduct of the proletariat "during and

after the forthcoming insurrection." As an example to German democracy, Marx pointed to Jacobin France of 1793 (see *The Cologne Communist Trial*).<sup>149</sup>

Six months passed. The expected revival did not come about. The efforts of the League proved unsuccessful. "The revival of the revolution," wrote Engels in 1885, "in 1850 became less and less probable and even impossible." The industrial crisis of 1847 passed away. A period of industrial prosperity set in. Taking the objective conditions into consideration, Marx put the question sharply and definitely. In the autumn of 1850 he categorically declared that now, in view of the flourishing state of development of the productive forces of bourgeois society, *a real revolution is unthinkable.*<sup>150</sup>

As the reader sees, Marx did not try to wriggle out of a difficult problem. He did not play with the word *revolution*, and did not replace the immediate political question by empty abstractions. He did not forget that in general the revolution was advancing, for bourgeois society was developing, but he said quite frankly that democratic revolution in the direct and narrow sense of the word was impossible. Marx did not solve a difficult problem by references to the mood, the depression and the weariness of this or that section of the proletariat (as not infrequently do certain Social-Democrats who fall into khvostism). No; so long

as he lacked other facts besides the fact of the mood of depression (March, 1850) he continued to call for armed rebellion and to prepare for it, and he refrained from lowering the morale of the proletariat by scepticism and confusion of thought. Only when Marx became convinced of the inevitable exhaustion of real revolution did he change his view, and, having done so, he directly and openly demanded a radical change of tactics, a complete cessation of preparation for rebellion, for under the conditions then prevailing such preparation would merely be playing at revolution. The slogan of rebellion was withdrawn. It was openly and definitely admitted that "the form of the movement has changed."

We must constantly keep this example of Marx before us in the present difficult situation. We must maintain a serious attitude towards the question of the possibility of real revolution in the immediate future, of the fundamental "form of the movement," of rebellion and preparation for it. But a fighting political party must answer this question directly and definitely, without evasions, without reservations and without half-expressed thoughts. A party that fails to find a clear reply to this question does not deserve the name of party.

## II.

What objective data have we for solving this problem? A number of facts which lie on the surface, so to speak, and which immediately strike

the eye tend to confirm the opinion that the direct revolutionary "form of the movement" has become exhausted, that Russia has entered the era of wretched, bourgeois quasi-constitutionalism. That the bourgeoisie has taken a sharp turn is an undoubted fact. The landlords have abandoned the Cadets and have joined the League of the 17th of October,<sup>151</sup> the Government has granted a two-Chamber constitution. Martial law, executions and arrests have created the conditions in which the convening of a counterfeit Duma is made possible. The rebellion in the towns has been suppressed and the peasant movements in the spring may prove to be isolated and impotent.<sup>152</sup> The sale of the big landlords' estates is proceeding and consequently the class of peaceful bourgeois peasants is increasing.<sup>153</sup> The mood of depression following on the suppression of the rebellion is a fact. Finally, we must not forget that it is much easier to predict the defeat of the revolution than to predict its revival, for at the present time power is on the side of reaction and, for the greater part, the revolution so far has ended—unaccomplished.

What data have we in favour of the contrary opinion? On this question we will give the floor to Karl Kautsky, the sobriety of whose views and whose ability calmly, carefully and in a business-like manner to discuss the acute political questions of the day is known to all Marxists. Kautsky expressed his views very soon after the suppression

of the Moscow rebellion in an article entitled *The Chances of the Russian Revolution*. This article has been published in Russian—mutilated by the censor of course (in the same way as the Russian translation of another excellent work by Kautsky, viz., *The Agrarian Question in Russia*, was mutilated).<sup>154</sup>

Kautsky does not evade a difficult question. He does not try to put it off with empty phrases about the invincibility of revolution in general, about the perpetual and constant revolutionary character of the proletariat etc. No, he sharply raises the concrete historical question of the chances of the present democratic revolution in Russia. Without equivocation, he commences his article with the remark that since the beginning of 1906 almost exclusively bad news has been coming from Russia, which "*might give rise to the opinion that the revolution has been finally suppressed and is at its last gasp.*" Not only are the reactionaries rejoicing over this, writes Kautsky, but so also are the Russian Liberals, and he pours a stream of well-deserved expressions of contempt upon these "coupon-clipping" heroes (apparently Kautsky did not yet believe in the Plekhanov theory that Russian Social-Democrats should "treasure the support of the non-proletarian opposition parties").<sup>155</sup>

Kautsky examines in detail this opinion which quite naturally arises. On the surface there is an undoubted similarity between the defeat of the

workers in Moscow and the defeat of the workers in Paris (1848). In both cases an armed rising of the workers was provoked by the government at a time when the working class was not yet sufficiently organised. In both cases reaction was triumphant, in spite of the heroic resistance put up by the workers. What conclusion does Kautsky draw from this? Does he argue in the pedantic style of Plekhanov that the workers should not have taken up arms?<sup>166</sup> No, Kautsky does not hasten to resort to near-sighted and cheap moralising after the event. He studies the objective data that can help to find a reply to the question as to whether the Russian revolution has been finally suppressed.

Kautsky notes four radical distinctions between the defeat of the proletariat in Paris (1848) and the defeat of the proletariat in Moscow (1905). First, the defeat in Paris was a defeat for the whole of France. This cannot be said with regard to Moscow. The workers of St. Petersburg, Kiev, Odessa, Warsaw and Lodz have not been crushed. They are exhausted after an extremely severe struggle lasting over a year, but their courage has not been broken. They are recuperating their strength in order to resume their struggle for liberty.

The second and still more important distinction is the fact that the peasantry in France in 1848 were on the side of the reaction, whereas the peasantry in Russia in 1905 were on the side of

the revolution. Peasant revolts are proceeding, whole armies are engaged in suppressing them. These armies are laying waste the country just as Germany was devastated by the Thirty Years' War.<sup>157</sup> Military executions have for a time terrified the peasantry, but they merely serve to intensify their poverty and make their condition more desperate. This will inevitably cause increasing masses of the people to declare war upon the existing system, as did the devastation of the Thirty Years' War in Germany, they will prevent peace from being established in the land, and the people will join any and every rebellion.

The third extremely important distinction is the following. The revolution of 1848 was caused by the crisis and the famine of 1847, the reaction was based on the cessation of the crisis and the return of prosperity in industry. "The present regime of terror in Rūssia, on the contrary, must inevitably lead to the accentuation of the economic crisis which has been hovering over the whole country for years." The famine of 1905 will make itself still more felt within the next few months with all its consequences.<sup>158</sup> The suppression of the revolution is a great civil war, a war conducted against the whole nation. This war will cost not less than a foreign war, and, moreover, it will ruin not an alien but the home country. A financial crisis is approaching.<sup>159</sup> The new commercial treaties threaten to cause particularly severe shocks

in the whole of Russia, and may give rise to a world economic crisis.<sup>160</sup> Thus, the longer the reactionary terror continues the more desperate must the economic condition of the country become and the more must popular indignation against the hated regime increase. "Such a situation," says Kautsky, "will make any strong movement against Tsarism invincible. And there will be no lack of such movements. The Russian proletariat, which has already given such excellent proof of its heroism and self-sacrifice, will see to that."

The fourth distinction to which Kautsky points is of special interest to Russian Marxists. Unfortunately, a sort of senile, purely Cadet snivelling about "Brownings" and "fighting detachments" is very widespread among us.<sup>161</sup> No one has the courage and frankness of Marx to say that rebellion is impossible and it is useless to prepare for it. But we very much love to snivel about the military operations of revolutionaries. We call ourselves Marxists, but we prefer to evade an analysis of the *military* side of rebellion (to which Marx and Engels attached serious significance) by declaring with the inimitable majesty of bigots that "you should not have taken to arms"—Kautsky behaves differently. Although as yet he had in his possession but little information concerning the revolution, nevertheless he tried to study also the military aspect of the question. He tried to appraise the movement as a new form of struggle devised by

the masses and not as our revolutionary Kuro-patkins<sup>162</sup> appraise battles: if they give, take; if they hit out, run away; if we are defeated—well, we should not have taken arms!

"The June battles in Paris," says Kautsky, "and the December battles in Moscow were barricade battles. The former, however, were a calamity, they were the end of the old barricade tactics; the latter were the beginning of new barricade tactics. To that extent, therefore, we must revise the view that the epoch of barricade fighting has definitely passed away."<sup>163</sup> As a matter of fact, the epoch of the *old* barricade tactics has passed away. This has been proved by the Moscow fighting, in which a handful of rebels for two weeks managed to hold their positions against excellent fighting forces armed with modern artillery."<sup>164</sup>

This is what Kautsky says. He does not sing the Requiem over the rebellion because it failed at the first attempt. He does not grumble and complain about the failure, but *investigates* the birth and growth of new and higher forms of the struggle; he analyses the significance of the state of disorganisation and discontent among the troops, the assistance rendered to the workers by the urban population and the combination of mass strikes with rebellion. He investigates the process of how the proletariat *learns* to rebel. He revises obsolete military tactics, and at the same time calls upon the Party to develop and study the experience of

Moscow. He regards the whole movement as a transition from strikes to rebellion, and tries to understand in what manner to combine the one with the other for the achievement of success.

Kautsky concludes his article with these words:

"Such are the lessons of Moscow. It is impossible at present to foresee from here [i.e., from Germany] what influence they will have upon the forms of struggle in the future. In fact up till now all previous manifestations of the Russian revolution have taken the form of spontaneous outbursts of the unorganised mass, not a single manifestation was outlined according to plan and prepared for beforehand. In all probability for a certain time this will be the case in the future.

"But while it is not possible at the present time as yet definitely to forecast the future forms of struggle, nevertheless, all the symptoms indicate that we must expect further battles, that the present gloomy (*unheimliche*) calm is but the calm before the storm. The October movement revealed to the masses themselves, in the towns and in the country, what strength they are capable of developing. The January reaction drove them over the precipice into the chasm of martyrdom. In this chasm everything tends to rouse them to indignation, and they will consider no price too high to pay for liberating themselves from it. Soon the masses will rise again, mightier than ever. Let the counter-revolution celebrate its triumph over the

corpses of the heroes of the struggle for liberty, the end of their triumph is at hand, the red dawn is approaching, *the proletarian revolution is coming.*"

### III.

The question we have outlined is a fundamental question that affects the whole of Social-Democratic tactics. The forthcoming Party Congress<sup>163</sup> must settle this question in the clearest and most unambiguous manner, and all members of the Party and all class-conscious workers must immediately exert all their efforts to collect comprehensive material that will aid in settling this question. They must discuss it and send delegates to the Congress who will be fully prepared for their serious and responsible task.<sup>164</sup>

The elections of delegates to the Congress must take place on the basis of the fullest clarity on the question of the tactical platform. In fact, the consistent and complete reply to the question that has been raised will predetermine the character of all the other parts of the Social-Democratic tactical platform.<sup>165</sup>

We have to decide upon one thing or another.

We must either admit that at the present time "real revolution is unthinkable"; in that case we must loudly and definitely declare this in order not to mislead ourselves or the proletariat or the whole people. In that case we must reject the task of carrying the democratic revolution to its end as the *direct* task of the proletariat. In that case we must

remove the question of rebellion from the order of the day, cease all work of arming and organising fighting units, for it is unworthy of a workers' party to play at revolution. In that case we must admit that the forces of revolutionary democracy are exhausted, and make it our direct business to support one or other section of the liberal democracy as the real opposition force under a constitutional regime. In that case we must regard the Duma as a parliament, although a bad one, and not only take part in elections but go into the Duma itself. In that case we must put the legal party into the forefront, change our Party programme accordingly, and adapt the whole of our Party work to bring it within the limits of the "law," or at all events reduce our illegal work to a minimum and give it a subordinate place. Then we must regard the task of organising trade unions as being a first-class Party task, as in the previous historical period we regarded the task of armed rebellion. We must, therefore, withdraw the revolutionary slogans of the peasant movement (for example, the confiscation of the landlords' land), for such slogans are the practical slogans of rebellion, and to call for rebellion without making serious military preparations for it, without being confident in its success, would be merely playing at rebellion, which is impermissible. In that case we must throw overboard all talk, not only of a provisional revolutionary government, but also of

the so-called "revolutionary self-government," for experience has shown that the institutions which are rightly or wrongly described by this term are by force of circumstances actually converted into organs of rebellion, into embryos of revolutionary government.<sup>168</sup>

Or real revolution is thinkable at the present time; we recognise new and higher forms of direct revolutionary struggles to be inevitable, or at all events most probable. In that case the most important political task of the proletariat, the nerve of all its work, the spirit of the whole of its organised *class* activity must be to *carry the democratic revolution to the end*. In that case all evasions from this task would be merely a degradation of the conception of the class struggle to Brentano<sup>169</sup> interpretations of the class struggle, and would be tantamount to converting the proletariat into the tail of the Liberal monarchists. In that case the immediate and central political task of the Party is to prepare the forces and the organisations of the proletariat for armed rebellion as the highest form of struggle achieved by the movement. In that case it is essential critically to study the whole experience of the December rebellion with a view to the most direct practical aims. In that case it is necessary to increase tenfold our efforts to organise fighting units and to arm them. In that case it is necessary to prepare for rebellion by means of guerilla attacks, for it would be ridiculous to

"prepare" merely by enrolments and drawing up lists. In that case we must regard the civil war as having been declared, and the proceedings and the *whole* activities of the Party must be subordinated to the principle: "in war as in war." In that case it is absolutely necessary to train cadres of the proletariat for *offensive* military operations. It would then be consistent to give out revolutionary slogans to the peasantry. The establishment of fighting agreements with the revolutionary, and only with the revolutionary, democracy comes to the forefront: the division of bourgeois democracy into revolutionary and reactionary is based on the question of rebellion. With those who are for rebellion the proletariat will "strike together," although it will "march separately"; against those who are against rebellion we will fight ruthlessly or repel from ourselves as contemptible hypocrites and Jesuits (Cadets).<sup>170</sup> In that case we bring to the front our criticism and exposure of constitutional illusions from the point of view of open civil war and concentrate attention upon the circumstances and conditions which will <sup>the last</sup> prepare for the spontaneous revolutionary outbreak. We will then regard the Duma not as a parliament but as a police office, and will reject any participation in these police controlled elections as something which corrupts and disorganises the proletariat. In these circumstances we will (as Marx did in 1849) place at the foundation of the party of the working class

a "strong, secret organisation," which must have a special apparatus for "open action," which will have its ramifications in all the legal societies and institutions from trade unions to the legal press."<sup>11</sup>

In short, we must either regard the democratic revolution as finished and withdraw the question of rebellion and take up the "constitutional" path, or we consider that the democratic revolution is continuing; then we place in the forefront the task of completing it, we develop and apply the slogan of rebellion in practice, proclaim the civil war and ruthlessly condemn all constitutional illusions.

It is hardly necessary to tell the reader that we are strongly in favour of the *latter* reply to the question which confronts the Party. The tactical programme attached hereto<sup>12</sup> should give a *résumé* of and systematically outline the views which we will submit to the Congress and advocate throughout the whole period of preparation for the Congress. This platform must not be regarded as something finished, but as an outline of the tactical questions and as a first draft of the resolutions which we will advocate at the Party Congress. The platform has been discussed at private meetings of ex-Bolsheviks whose views coincide with ours (among these are the editors and members of the staff of *Proletarii*) and is the fruit of our collective efforts.

*Izvestia of the Party*, No. 2, March 20th, 1906. Signed:  
"Bolshevik."

EVER since the events which started the revolution the workers, both Bolshevik and Menshevik, had been strongly demanding the amalgamation of the organisations. They themselves brought it about spontaneously under different forms at the base. The leaders were then obliged to fall in with the general movement. What were called "federative committees" began to be formed, and, finally, as a result of conferences among the leaders, there came into existence a united Central Committee and a common organ called *Izvestia of the Party*, and it was decided to hold a general congress to bring about unity.

The increase in the membership of the Party (in Moscow alone 5,300 members, at Tiflis 4,000 and at Kineshma 300), the activities of the majority of the members, and the very end in view—urgently called for a radical change in the methods up till then employed. The Congress was really to represent the Party and to decide all questions in conformity with its will. For this, the two factions, having agreed as to the agenda, set themselves to prepare separate draft resolutions. Lenin directed the preparation of the Bolshevik "platform." All these tentative resolutions were to have been discussed in the general meetings of the organisations.

It seemed then as if accord—more indeed in practice than in theory—had, roughly speaking, been established between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Even as to the question regarding the Duma, if the Bolsheviks were for an absolute boycott, the Menshevik leaders on their side did not dare to push participation up to the last stage of the elections, that is to say, the election of the deputies themselves. The hands of the organisations were left free in the matter. Most of

them, including those with Menshevik majorities, were for boycott. That seemed to be the only revolutionary solution under the circumstances of the repressive regime and martial law which held sway, in the absence of any freedom of agitation and in view of the Cadet Party's attitude, which contributed towards creating among the people the illusion of a constitutional régime. It was only in Georgia, where the peasant movement had, as a matter of fact, overthrown the Tsarist authorities, that the elections were gone through to the end, and resulted in the return to the Duma of several Social-Democratic (Menshevik) deputies.

About this time the electoral campaign was reaching its end, and the Cadets registered one success after another. As the Social Revolutionary Party had also adopted boycott tactics, most of the votes of the Opposition elements went to the Cadet candidates, the rest to the "non-party" Radicals, who called themselves the Labour Group.

When this result became known, many, among the Mensheviks to begin with, held the boycott tactics as responsible for it. The Unity Congress, which at last assembled at Stockholm in April, 1906, adopted, with some amendments, a resolution proposed by the Mensheviks, which contemplated the utilisation, for revolutionary purposes, of the coming conflicts between the Duma and the Government, and declared as desirable the formation in the Duma of a "Social-Democratic Group, which, constantly acting under the direction and control of the central authorities of the party, would by its criticism push all the bourgeois parties into more definite opposition (to the Government)." In conclusion, "at all places where the elections are not yet finished, and where the Social-Democratic Party may

put forward candidates without making a bloc with other parties, it should try to have its candidates returned to the Duma." This last paragraph, adopted on the proposition of the Caucasian delegates, secured the vote of many Bolsheviks, among others of Lenin.

Politically, the Congress in this way inaugurated new tactics. Without associating himself with the speeches of the Mensheviks who spoke of the "error" of the boycott in the past, Lenin considered that the moment had come to adopt other tactics and to participate in the elections and the parliamentary struggle.

The first Duma met on 27th April. From day to day Lenin interested himself in the debates of the Duma and studied the evolution of the parties and the classes. From Kuokkala, in Finland, where Lenin had taken refuge at the end of May to escape from prosecutions, he published the result of his studies in the short-lived organs—*Volna* (*The Wave*), *Vperiod* (*Forward*) and the *Echo*. These organs, which were suppressed by the police as soon as they came out, one after another, were got out by the Bolshevik fraction, which was beginning to be active in spite of the "Unity" Congress. While the Mensheviks and the Central Committee of the Party, in which they had the majority, considered the Duma as a bloc to be supported and set up against the bureaucracy, the Bolsheviks held that the workers had nothing to do with supporting an assembly led by Cadets, and that the only thing to do was to follow the process by which the urban and particularly the rural petty bourgeoisie in the person of the Labour Group (Trudoviki) would detach itself little by little from the counter-revolutionary domination of bourgeois Liberalism as represented by the Cadets.

The division between the Labour Group and the

Cadets naturally showed itself markedly on the agrarian question. When Goremykin (the Minister who succeeded Witte) announced on 20th June that he was categorically opposed to the procedure for solving this question indicated by the Duma in its reply to the Address from the Throne, the Cadets drew up an appeal to the people declaring that the Duma had not given up its agrarian projects, and inviting the population to wait calmly for the end of its labours. On 6th July the appeal was adopted by 124 votes against only 54 votes of the Right Social-Democrats, and 101 abstentions on the part of the Labour Group.

This appeal and the debates to which it gave rise furnished the Government with the sought-for occasion to dissolve the Duma (the night of July 8th-9th). As a protest 180 deputies, after much hesitation, betook themselves to Vyborg, in Finland, and from there launched a manifesto forbidding the collection of taxes and the enrolment of recruits, and declaring all loans which might be concluded by the Government without the consent of the Duma as null and void. The Social Democrats and the Labour Group were for bolder measures. The Social-Democratic Central Committee, under the pressure of the Petersburg Committee and won over by the Bolsheviks, the Labour Group, the Social-Revolutionaries and the three Leagues: the peasants, railwaymen and the school teachers, signed a joint appeal *To the Army and the Navy and To All the Peasants of Russia*, declaring that henceforward the Government was illegal, and inviting the peasants to elect committees to take possession of the land and the soldiers to refuse to fire on their brothers.

Here was already, as a matter of fact, the bloc of the left as demanded by Lenin in the following article.

The great idea then was—as he explained in his brochure, *The Dissolution of the Duma and the Objectives of the Proletariat*—to unite the general strike, the peasant revolts and the army mutinies in one single and powerful revolutionary current. The Mensheviks, on the contrary, had conceived the slogan: *For the Duma as an instrument for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly*, and inclined towards an electoral agreement with the Cadets. There was thus a formal disagreement between the two tendencies.

The *Proletarii*, in whose first number this article was published, was the illegal organ founded by the Petersburg and Moscow committees for the purpose of uniting the Bolshevik committees with the Central Committee and its Menshevik majority.

## THE BOYCOTT<sup>173</sup>

The Social-Democratic left wing must re-examine the question of the boycott of the Duma. It should be borne in mind that we have always discussed this question in connection with concrete circumstances and a definite political situation. For example *Proletarii* (Geneva) wrote: "It would be ridiculous to forswear for all time to utilise even the Bulygin Duma if it should be established," and with regard to the Witte Duma, N. Lenin wrote in the pamphlet *Social-Democracy and the Duma* (by N. Lenin and F. Dan):<sup>174</sup> "We must once again and in a business-like manner discuss the question of tactics. The situation to-day is not what it was in the time of the Bulygin Duma."

The principal difference between the revolutionary and opportunist Social-Democrats on the question of the boycott is as follows. The opportunists confine themselves to applying the stereotyped methods copied from a special period in the history of German socialism to all situations in Russia.<sup>175</sup> We must utilise representative institutions. The Duma is a representative institution. Therefore the boycott is anarchism, we must go into the Duma. This simple, childish syllogism exhausted all the arguments that our Mensheviks, and especially Plekhanov, could advance. The Menshevik resolution on the significance of representative institutions in a revolutionary epoch (see *Party News*, No. 2), strik-

ingly reveals the stereotyped and anti-historical character of this reasoning."<sup>16</sup>

Unlike the Mensheviks, revolutionary Social-Democrats lay most stress upon the necessity for carefully calculating the concrete political situation. It is impossible to appreciate the tasks of the Russian revolutionary epoch by merely copying stereotyped German methods, taken one-sidedly from a recent epoch, entirely forgetting the lessons of 1847-48. It will be impossible for us to understand anything about the progress of our revolution if we confine ourselves to making bare contrasts between "Anarchist" boycott and Social-Democratic participation in elections. Learn from the history of the Russian revolution, gentlemen!

This history has *proved* that the boycott of the Bulygin Duma was the only possible tactics that could have been adopted at the time and which have been wholly justified by events. He who forgets this argues about the boycott while totally ignoring the lessons of the Bulygin Duma (as the Mensheviks always ignore these lessons), exposes his own poverty of thought and exposes his inability to understand one of the most important and eventful periods of the Russian revolution. The tactics of boycotting the Bulygin Duma quite properly took into account the temper of the revolutionary proletariat and the special objective features of the moment, which made an immediate general outbreak inevitable."<sup>17</sup>

We come now to the *second* lesson of history —to the Witte, Cadet Duma.<sup>11</sup> Nowadays one frequently hears Social-Democratic intellectuals making speeches of repentance concerning the boycott of the Duma. The fact that it did assemble and undoubtedly rendered indirect service to the revolution is regarded as a sufficient reason for repently regarding the boycott of the Witte Duma as having been a mistake.

This point of view is extremely narrow and one-sided. It fails to take into consideration a number of important facts relating to the period prior to the Witte Duma, to the period of the Duma and to the period after its dissolution. Recall the fact that the law defining the method of election to this Duma was promulgated on December 11th, at the time when the rebels were carrying on an armed fight for a Constituent Assembly. Recall the fact that even the Menshevik *Natchalo*<sup>12</sup> (*The Beginning*) wrote at the time: "The proletariat will sweep away the Witte Duma in the same way as it swept away the Bulygin Duma."

Under the circumstances the proletariat could not and should not without a fight have surrendered to the Tsar the initiative of convening the first representative institution in Russia. The proletariat is obliged to fight against the attempt to consolidate the autocracy by means of a loan guaranteed by the Witte Duma.<sup>13</sup> The proletariat is obliged to fight against constitutional illusions, upon which

The Cadet election campaign and the elections among the peasantry were *entirely* based in the spring of 1906. At that time, when the significance of the Duma was being greatly exaggerated, it was impossible to carry on that fight in any other way except by means of the boycott. The extent to which the widespread constitutional illusions were connected with the election campaign in the elections of the spring of 1906 is strikingly evident from the example given by our Mensheviks. It is sufficient to recall that the resolution of the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. described the Duma as a "power,"<sup>181</sup> in spite of the warnings of the Bolsheviks. Another example: with complete self-assurance Plekhanov wrote: "The Government will fall into the abyss when the Duma is dissolved." In reply to him it was said at the time: we must prepare to throw the enemy into the abyss and not, like Cadets, place hopes upon the autocracy "falling" into the abyss. And very soon after, these latter words were proved correct.<sup>182</sup>

The proletariat was obliged to preserve the independence of its tactics, which were to unite with the conscious peasantry against the wavering and treacherous Liberal, monarchist bourgeoisie. But it was *impossible* to apply these tactics during the elections to the Witte Duma owing to a number of circumstances, both objective and subjective, created by the fact that in the overwhelming majority of constituencies participation in the elections implied

the tacit support of the Cadets by the workers' party. The proletariat could not and should not have adopted half-hearted and artificial tactics, based on cunning and born of consternation, of participating in elections to the Duma, but not for the Duma. It is an historical fact, which the silence and the evasions of the Mensheviks cannot remove, that *none of them*, not even Plekhanov, could support the Duma in the press. It is a fact that *not a single word* was uttered in the press in favour of going into the Duma.<sup>113</sup> It is a fact that in the leaflet published by the United Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the boycott was officially recognised and the only point around which the dispute centred was the extent to which the boycott should be carried. It is a fact that the Mensheviks placed most emphasis, not on the elections to the Duma, but on the elections as such, even while they were proceeding, as a means for organising for rebellion, for sweeping away the Duma. Events showed, however, that it was impossible to carry on mass agitation during the elections, while there was a limited possibility of carrying on agitation among the masses from the Duma itself.<sup>114</sup>

He who seriously takes all these complex facts, objective and subjective, into consideration will realise that the case of the Caucasus was but an exception which proved the rule.<sup>115</sup> He will understand that the repentant speeches and attempts to explain the boycott by saying that it was a piece of

“youthful impetuosity” only reveal an extremely narrow, superficial and short-sighted estimation of events.

The dissolution of the Duma has now clearly demonstrated that in the conditions prevailing in the spring of 1906 the boycott was on the whole the proper tactics to employ and proved beneficial.<sup>186</sup> Only by means of the boycott could the Social-Democrats fulfil their duty under the conditions which then prevailed—their duty of giving to the people the necessary warnings concerning the Tsarist Constitution and of subjecting to the necessary criticism the charlatanism of the Cadets during the elections, which warnings and criticism were strikingly substantiated by the dissolution of the Duma.

Here is an example in illustration of what has been said. In the spring of 1906, Mr. Vodovozov, semi-Cadet, semi-Menshevik, was wholeheartedly in favour of the Cadets. Yesterday (August 11th), he wrote in *Tovarisch (Comrade)*<sup>187</sup> that the Cadets “desired to be a parliamentary party in a country which had no parliament and a constitutional party in a country that had no constitution,” that “the whole character of the Constitutional Democratic Party has been determined by the essential contradiction that exists between a radical programme and altogether unradical tactics.”

A greater triumph the Bolsheviks could not desire than this admission on the part of this left-wing Cadet or right-wing Plekhanovist.

However, while absolutely rejecting the pusillanimous and short-sighted speeches of repentance, while rejecting the silly explanation of the boycott by "youthful impetuosity," we are far from rejecting the *new* lessons of the Cadet Duma. To be afraid openly to admit and take into consideration these new lessons would be mere pedantry. History has shown that when the Duma is convened possibilities arise for useful agitation within the Duma and around it—that the tactics of joining with the revolutionary peasants against the Cadets are possible of application in the Duma. This may appear paradoxical but such undoubtedly is the irony of history. It is precisely the Cadet Duma that has clearly demonstrated to the masses the correctness of what we might briefly describe as anti-Cadet tactics. History has ruthlessly rejected all constitutional illusions and all faith in the Duma. But history has also undoubtedly proved that this institution can be used by the revolution, if only to a limited extent, as a tribune for agitation, for exposing the true nature of the political parties etc.

From this we draw the conclusion that it is ridiculous to close our eyes to facts. The time has now come when revolutionary Social-Democrats must cease to be boycottists; we will not refuse to go into the Second Duma when (or if) it is convened. We will not refuse to utilise this arena of battle, although we will not in the least exaggerate its modest significance, but, on the contrary, guided

by the experience of history, we will subordinate it to another form of struggle, namely, strikes, insurrection etc. We will call the Fifth Congress of our Party and there resolve that in the event of elections taking place we will come to an election agreement, for a few weeks, with the Trudoviki (Labour Group).<sup>188</sup> Unless we call the Fifth Congress of the Party we shall be unable to carry on a vigorous election campaign, for the resolutions of the Fourth<sup>189</sup> Congress undoubtedly prohibit any kind of "bloc with other parties." Let us decide on this, and we shall utterly rout the Cadets.<sup>190</sup>

But this does not in the least exhaust the complex tasks that now confront us. We deliberately emphasised the phrase "in the event of elections taking place" etc. We do not yet know whether the Second Duma will be convened, when the elections will take place,<sup>191</sup> what electoral qualifications will be imposed, and what the situation will be at the time. Hence, our conclusion suffers from being extremely general. We require this conclusion in order to sum up the experience of the past, to take note of the lessons of the past, to put the forthcoming questions of tactics on a proper basis, but it is totally inadequate to solve the concrete problems of immediate tactics.

Only Cadets and those like them<sup>192</sup> can content themselves at the present time with conclusions such as these, create for themselves "slogans" out of sighs for a new Duma and strive to impress upon

the government the desirability of convening it as soon as possible.<sup>133</sup> Only conscious or unconscious traitors to the revolution would *at the present time* exert their efforts to divert the imminent and inevitable recrudescence of temper and excitement among the masses into elections and not into a fight conducted by means of a general strike and insurrection.

This brings us to the crux of the question of present day Social-Democratic tactics. The question is not now as to whether Social-Democrats should or should not take part in elections as such. To say "yes" or "no" in this case means to say absolutely nothing concerning the fundamental problem of the moment. On the surface, the political situation in August, 1906, is similar to that of August, 1905, but enormous progress has been made during the past year. The forces fighting on the one side and the other, the forms of the struggle and the time required for carrying out strategical movements, if we may so describe them, have become more exactly defined.

The plan of the Government is clear. It is absolutely correct in its calculations when it fixes the date for convening the Duma but, contrary to the law,<sup>134</sup> does not fix the date of the elections. The Government does not desire to tie its hands or to expose its cards. First of all it gains time in which to think over the changes it can make in the election law; secondly, and what is more important, it keeps in reserve the fixing of the date for the

elections for the time when the nature and intensity of the rise in the temper of the people will become more defined. The Government wishes to fix the elections to take place at a particular time (and perhaps also in a particular form), when it will be possible to *split and paralyse the rebellion that is beginning*. The Government's reasoning is correct; if things remain quiet, they argue, perhaps we will not convene the Duma at all, or revert to the Bulygin laws. If, however, a strong movement breaks out, we will try to break it up, fix provisional elections and, by these elections, decoy certain cowards or simpletons away from the direct revolutionary struggle.

Liberal blockheads (see *Tovarisch* and *Retch*<sup>195</sup> [*Speech*]) so utterly fail to understand the situation that they crawl into the net set by the Government. They try with might and main to prove that the Duma is necessary and that it is necessary that the rising mood of the masses should be directed into the channels of elections. But even they cannot deny that the question and the form of the immediate struggle is still an open one. To-day's *Retch* (August 12th) admits that "as yet it is not known what the peasants will say in the Autumn." "Until the temper of the peasantry becomes definitely revealed, i.e., until September or October, it is impossible to make any general forecasts."

The Liberal bourgeoisie remain true to their nature. They do not desire, nor are they capable

of helping to select the form of the struggle by defining the temper of the peasantry one way or another. The interests of the bourgeoisie demand, not the overthrow of the old government, but merely that it be weakened and that a Liberal Cabinet be formed."<sup>6</sup>

The interests of the proletariat demand the complete overthrow of the old Tsarist Government and the convocation of a fully empowered Constituent Assembly. Their interests demand the most active agitation among the peasantry, the selection of the most resolute forms of struggle and of the best moment for undertaking it. We must not under any circumstances withdraw or gloss over the slogan: Convene the Constituent Assembly by revolutionary means, i.e., through the medium of a provisional revolutionary government. We must try to obtain a clear idea of what the circumstances of the rebellion will be, combine it with the strike movement, rally and prepare all the revolutionary forces for its purpose, and so on. We must resolutely take up the path that was outlined in the celebrated manifestoes, *To the Army and the Navy* and *To All Peasants*, which were signed by the bloc of all revolutionary organisations, including the Labour Group.<sup>197</sup> Finally, we must particularly see to it that the government shall have no opportunity of splitting, delaying or weakening the rebellion, which is already beginning, by any sort of election. In this connection the lessons of the Cadet Duma,

which teach us that the Duma campaign is a subordinate and second-rate form of struggle and that, owing to objective conditions, the direct revolutionary movement of the great masses of the people still remains the principal form of struggle, are obligatory for us.

Of course, the tactics of subordinating the Duma campaign to the principal struggle and of keeping this campaign in reserve in the event of the battle ending badly for us, or of it being postponed until the experience of the Second Duma is repeated, may, if you will, be described as the old boycott tactics. On formal grounds this description might be justified, for preparations for the elections—apart from the always necessary work of agitation and propaganda—consist of petty, technical preparations, which very rarely can be made a long time before the elections. We do not wish to argue about words, however. In substance, these tactics are the consistent *development* of the old tactics, but not a *repetition* of them. They are a conclusion drawn from the previous boycott, but they are not the same thing as the previous boycott.

To sum up. We must take into consideration the experience of the Cadet Duma and spread its lessons among the masses. We must prove that the Duma is useless, that the Constituent Assembly is essential, that the Cadets are wavering; we must demand that the Trudoviki shall throw off the yoke of the Cadets and we must support the former against

the latter. We must immediately recognise the necessity for the Social-Democrats and the Trudoviki to come to an election agreement in the event of the elections taking place. We must exert all our efforts to counteract the plan of the Government to split the rebellion by appointing elections. While supporting our tried revolutionary slogans with greater energy than ever, Social-Democrats must exert all their efforts to rally more closely all the revolutionary elements and classes in order to convert the rise in general temper, which is very probable in the immediate future, into a popular armed rebellion against the Tsarist Government.

August 21st, 1906.

**I**N the summer of 1906 the Mensheviks published an anonymous book entitled *Moscow in December 1905*. In it were described, day by day, the events of the general strike and the insurrection. There were different chapters on the rôle of the revolutionary organisations, the operations of the workers' fighting detachments, the conduct of the troops and the police, the attitude of the population etc. Based on Party documents, newspaper articles and the testimony of participants, and appearing barely six months after the events, it was thus invested with considerable importance from the point of view of the conclusions to be drawn for the future tactics of the revolutionaries.

The general tendency of the book was to minimise the part of the popular masses in the movement and to represent the insurrection solely as the work of a few fighting detachments. Acting on behalf of its own interests only, having on its side only the passive sympathy of the population, the proletariat was not in a position to receive the support of the army; consequently, in these conditions "to attempt to transform the general strike into an insurrection" was an error which was bound to lead to defeat. Such was the general conclusion of the book.

In the following article Lenin makes use of the numerous facts given in the book in order to draw practical lessons exactly opposed to the conclusions of the authors of the book. He criticised these conclusions in a second article entitled *Hands Off!* which appeared in the next issue of *Proletarii*.

## *THE LESSONS OF THE MOSCOW INSURRECTION<sup>\*\*</sup>*

The publication of *Moscow in December 1905* (Moscow, 1906) could not have been more opportune. It is the most important duty of the workers' party to study the lessons of the December insurrection. Unfortunately, this book is good only in parts. The material contained in it, although not complete, is most interesting, but the conclusions from it are slovenly drawn and incredibly flat. We will deal with these conclusions another time. At the moment, we will deal with the political question of the day, the lessons of the Moscow insurrection.

The December movement in Moscow assumed principally the form of peaceful strikes and demonstrations. The overwhelming majority of the workers actively participated only in this form of struggle.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> But the December action which took place in Moscow proved that the general strike has become obsolete as an independent and principal form of struggle; it has shown that the movement breaks through these boundaries with irresistible force and gives rise to a higher form of struggle, namely, insurrection.

All the revolutionary parties and unions in Moscow which declared the strike were aware that it must inevitably grow into insurrection. On December 6th, the Council of Workers' Deputies

resolved "To strive to transform the strike into armed insurrection."<sup>200</sup> As a matter of fact none of these organisations was prepared for this. Even the Coalition Council of Fighting Units spoke (December 9th) of the insurrection as of something remote, and no doubt the street fighting took place independently of it and without its participation.<sup>201</sup> The organisation did not keep pace with the growth and extension of the movement.

The strike grew into insurrection first of all as the result of the operation of the objective conditions created after October. The Government could no longer be taken by surprise by a general strike. It had already organised the counter-revolution in preparation for military action. The general progress of the Russian revolution after October and the sequence of events in Moscow in the December days confirmed in an astonishing manner one of the most profound of Marx's postulates: revolution progresses by the fact that it creates a compact and strong counter-revolution, *i.e.*, it compels the enemy more and more to resort to extreme measures of defence and in this way devises more powerful means of attack.

The 7th and 8th of December: a peaceful strike, peaceful mass demonstrations. The evening of December 8th: siege of the Aquarium.<sup>202</sup> December 9th: dragoons attack the crowd on Strastnaya Square.<sup>203</sup> The evening of December 9th: Fiedler's house is wrecked.<sup>204</sup> Popular temper rises. Street

crowds, unorganised and absolutely spontaneously, but hesitatingly, set up the first barricades. December 10th: artillery fire is opened on the barricades and on the crowds in the streets. Barricades are set up more deliberately and no longer singly but on a mass scale. The whole population is on the streets; all the principal centres of the town are covered by the network of barricades.<sup>205</sup> Within the course of a few days stubborn guerilla fighting developed between the revolutionary detachments and the troops, which wearied the troops and compelled Dubassov to appeal for reinforcements.<sup>206</sup> Only on the 15th of December did the Government forces acquire complete superiority; and on the 17th the Semenov regiment stormed the Presnya district, the last stronghold of the rebellion.<sup>207</sup>

From strike and demonstration to single barricades. From single barricades to the mass construction of barricades and street fighting against the troops. Over the heads of the organisations the mass proletarian struggle became transformed from a strike into insurrection. This is the great historical achievement of the Russian revolution obtained by the insurrection of December 1905, obtained, like all other achievements, at the price of enormous sacrifices. The movement was raised from the level of the general political strike to the highest pitch. It compelled the reaction to go to extremes in its resistance and so brought very much nearer the moment when the revolution will also

go to extremes in its methods of attack. The reaction cannot go further than bombard barricades, houses and street crowds with artillery. The revolution, however, has other means at its disposal besides the Moscow fighting detachments, and has opportunities of increasing in breadth and depth. The revolution has made great progress since December. The base of the revolutionary crisis has become immeasurably broader—the blade must now be sharpened to a keener edge.

The proletariat sensed sooner than its leaders the change in the objective conditions of the struggle which demanded a transition from the strike to insurrection. As is always the case, practice ran ahead of theory. The peaceful strike and demonstration almost immediately ceased to satisfy the workers, who began to ask: What next? They began to demand more active measures. The instructions to set up barricades that came from district headquarters were much belated, for barricades had already been set up in the centre of the city before the instructions arrived.<sup>200</sup> The masses of the workers set to work, but they did not rest content even with that, they demanded to know: What next? They demanded active measures. In December, we leaders of the Social-Democratic proletariat found ourselves in the position of the general who arranged the disposition of his troops in such a stupid manner that the greater part of them remained out of action. The masses of the

workers demanded, but failed to obtain, instructions concerning mass action.<sup>209</sup>

Consequently, nothing could be more shortsighted than Plekhanov's view, which everybody is now clutching at, viz., that inopportune strikes should not have been started, that "they should not have taken to arms."<sup>210</sup> On the contrary, they should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively. It should have been explained to the masses that peaceful strikes by themselves were useless, and that fearless and ruthless armed struggle was required. The time has come when we must at last openly and publicly admit that political strikes are insufficient. We must carry on the widest agitation among the masses in favour of armed insurrection and make no attempt to conceal this question by "preliminary stages" or by throwing a veil over it. To conceal from the masses the necessity for desperate, sanguinary, devastating war as the immediate task of future revolutionary action means to deceive ourselves and to deceive the people.

This is the first lesson of the December events. The second lesson refers to the character of the insurrection, the methods by which it is carried out and the conditions under which the troops may come over to the side of the people. In the right wing of our Party an extremely one-sided view on this matter prevails. According to this view, it is impossible to fight against modern troops. The

troops must first become revolutionary.<sup>211</sup> If the revolution does not assume a mass character and does not also affect the troops, then, of course, there can be no thought of serious fighting. Work among the troops is, of course, necessary. But the transition of the troops to the side of the people must not be pictured as a simple, single act, resulting from conviction and consciousness. The Moscow insurrection demonstrated how stereotyped and lifeless is this view. As a matter of fact, whenever a really popular movement breaks out, the inevitable wavering of the troops leads to a regular fight for the troops when the revolutionary struggle reaches an acute stage. The Moscow insurrection was an example of a most desperate and frenzied struggle between the reaction and the revolution for the troops. Dubassov himself admitted that out of the 15,000 of the Moscow troops at his command, only 5,000 were reliable. The Government restrained the wavers by most varied and desperate measures; they were appealed to, flattered, bribed; they were presented with watches, money etc., they were intoxicated with vodka, they were lied to, they were threatened; they were confined to barracks, disarmed; and those soldiers who were assumed to be least reliable were removed either by deception or by violence. We must have the courage openly to confess that in this respect we lagged behind the Government. We failed to utilise the forces at our disposal to carry on a similar

active, bold, enterprising and aggressive fight for the wavering troops whom the Government managed to retain on its side. We have worked, and will now continue to work with greater energy to prepare the minds of the troops, but we shall prove to be miserable pedants if we forget that at the moment of insurrection we must carry on a physical fight for the troops.<sup>212</sup>

In the December days the Moscow proletariat gave us a splendid lesson in preparing the minds of the troops. For example, on December 8th the crowds on Straßnaya Square surrounded the Cossacks, mixed with them, fraternised with them and persuaded them to go away. Again, on the 10th, in the Presnya district, two young working girls carrying a red flag and leading a crowd of 10,000, rushed forward to meet the Cossacks with cries: "Kill us, we will not surrender this flag as long as we are alive." And the Cossacks were staggered by these cries and rode away amidst the shouts of the crowd, "Long live the Cossacks!"<sup>213</sup> These examples of bravery and heroism will for ever be stamped upon the memory of the proletariat.

But here are some examples of how we lagged behind Dubassov. On December 9th a detachment of soldiers was marching down the Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street to join the insurgents, singing the "Marseillaise." The workers sent a number of delegates to meet them. Malakhov himself

galloped towards them at break-neck speed.<sup>214</sup> The workers got there too late. Malakhov reached the soldiers before them. He delivered a passionate speech to the soldiers, caused them to waver and then surrounding them with dragoons, marched them off to the barracks and locked them in. Malakhov arrived in time, but we did not, in spite of the fact that within two days 150,000 men and women rose at our call, and these could and should have organised street patrols. Malakhov managed to surround the soldiers with dragoons, but we failed to surround Malakhov with bomb-throwers. We could and should have done this. Long ago the Social-Democratic press (*Iskra*) pointed out that the ruthless extermination of civil and military officials is our duty in time of insurrection. What took place on the Bolshaya Serpukhovskaya Street was repeated apparently in front of the Nesvizhsky and Krutitsky barracks;<sup>215</sup> was repeated when the workers made an attempt to persuade the Ekaterinoslavs to go away, when delegates were sent to the Sappers in Alexandrov, when the Rostov artillery on its way to Moscow was turned back, when the Sappers were disarmed in Kolomna, etc. At the moment of insurrection we were not quite equal to our task in the fight for the wavering troops.

December confirmed another profound postulate of Marx, which our opportunists have forgotten, viz., that rebellion is an art and that the principal

rule of this art is—desperately bold and irrevocably determined attack.<sup>216</sup> We have not yet thoroughly assimilated this truth. We have not thoroughly learned, nor have we taught the masses this rule to attack at all costs. We must make up for this with all our energy. It is not enough to rally round political slogans, we must also rally round the question of armed insurrection. Those who are against this, and who refuse to prepare for it must be ruthlessly expelled from the revolutionary ranks and sent back to the ranks of the opponents of the revolution, of the traitors or cowards, for the day is coming when the force of circumstances, the conditions of the struggle, will make this question the dividing line between our friends and our enemies. We must not preach passivity, we must not "wait" until the troops "come over." No! We must preach from the housetops that bold attack, armed offensive is necessary, that the enemy leaders must be exterminated, and that the most determined fight must be carried on for the wavering troops.

The third lesson to be learned from Moscow concerns the tactics of the organisation of forces for insurrection. Military tactics are determined by the level of military technique—this truism was repeated over and over again for the benefit of Marxists by Engels.<sup>217</sup> Modern military technique is not as it was in the first half of the nineteenth century. It would be stupid for crowds to attempt to contend against artillery and to defend barri-

cades with revolvers. Kautsky was right when he said that after Moscow it is necessary to revise Engels' conclusions on this subject, and that Moscow has advanced new barricade tactics. These tactics were the tactics of guerilla warfare. The organisation which such tactics demanded took the form of mobile and small detachments of tens, threes and even twos. There are many Social-Democrats among us who titter when they hear detachments of fives and threes spoken about.<sup>216</sup> But tittering is only a cheap way of ignoring the question of new tactics and organisation of street fighting under the conditions imposed by modern military technique. Study carefully the story of the Moscow insurrection, gentlemen, and you will understand what connection exists between "fives" and the "new barricade tactics."<sup>217</sup>

Moscow advanced these tactics, but did not develop them to any great mass extent. The number of men taking part in these detachments was very small. The working class was not given the slogan of bold attack, and did not apply it. The character of these irregular detachments was not sufficiently varied. Their weapons and methods were inadequate, their ability to lead the crowd was almost entirely undeveloped.<sup>218</sup> We must, and we shall, make up for all this by studying the experience of Moscow, by spreading it among the masses, and by arousing their creative efforts for the further development of that experience. The

guerilla warfare, the mass terror, which has now continued in Russia almost unceasingly since December, will undoubtedly teach the masses the correct tactics to adopt at the time of insurrection.<sup>221</sup> Social-Democracy must recognise and incorporate this mass terror into its tactics. Of course, it must be organised and controlled, subordinated to the interests and conditions of the Labour movement and the general revolutionary struggle, while the hooligan distortion of irregular warfare, which the Muscovites in the days of the insurrection and the Letts in the days of the famous Lettish Republics so ruthlessly and thoroughly exterminated,<sup>222</sup> must be utterly suppressed.

Military technique has made remarkable progress in recent years. The Russo-Japanese War produced the hand grenade; automatic firearms have been placed on the market. Both these weapons are being successfully used in the Russian revolution, but as yet to an inadequate extent. We can and must take advantage of the improvements in technique. We must teach the workers' detachments to make quantities of bombs,<sup>223</sup> we must help them to collect stores of explosives, fuses and firearms. If the masses of the workers take part in urban rebellions, if mass attacks are made upon the enemy, if a determined, skilful fight is waged for the troops, who will waver still more after the Duma, after Sveaborg and Kronstadt,<sup>224</sup> and if we are sure of the participation of the rural districts in the

general struggle, victory will be ours in the next all-Russian armed rebellion.

Let us then more extensively develop our work and more boldly take up our task, while learning the lessons of the great days of the Russian revolution. The basis of our work is the correct calculation of class interests and the requirements of national development at the present time. Around the slogan of the overthrow of Tsarist rule and the convention of a Constituent Assembly by the revolutionary government, we are rallying, and will continue to rally a large section of the proletariat, the peasantry and the army. The development of the consciousness of the masses remains, as always, the basis and the principal content of our work. But we shall not forget that in addition to the general, constant and fundamental task, times like those which Russia is now living through impose other and special tasks upon us. We shall not become pedants and Philistines. We shall not shrink from these special tasks of the moment imposed on us by the present forms of struggle, on the feeble grounds that we must stick to our customary tasks, which are immutable, irrespective of time and circumstance.

Let us bear in mind that the great mass struggle is approaching. This will be armed insurrection. As far as possible, it must be simultaneous. The masses must understand that they are entering upon an armed, sanguinary and desperate struggle. The

masses must become imbued with a contempt for death, and this will bring us victory. The attack upon the enemy must be most energetic. Attack and not defence must become the slogan of the masses. Ruthless extermination of the enemy—this will be their task. The organisation of the struggle will become mobile and flexible. The wavering elements among the troops will be drawn into the active struggle. The Party of the class-conscious proletariat must fulfil its duty in this great fight.

*Proletarii*, No. 2, August 29th, 1906.

**T**HE formation of armed detachments or fighting squads, directed by the parties, had begun after the events of October, 1905. The purpose of these squads was to resist the gangs of so-called "Black Hundreds" (who were subsidised by the reactionaries), to prevent pogroms, to protect revolutionary demonstrations and to obstruct hostile demonstrations.

The December risings, however, imposed on these squads and the "fighting organisations" of the parties a greater task, that of combatting the Government troops.

After the defeat and the end of large-scale operations, when the Labour movement itself seemed to have been crushed for a time, the active elements in the squads turned their revolutionary courage in another direction. They either committed isolated assassinations of representatives of the State authority or organised "expropriations," attacks on banks, money in transit, mail trains etc.

These acts became general in the reactionary and repressive period after the dissolution of the first Duma and became a danger to the revolutionary movement. Often, in fact, the "expropriators," acting on the principle of following the line of least resistance, attacked some ordinary bourgeois or a factory cashier carrying money for the weekly wages, and so on. The result was that the line of demarcation between a revolutionary act and a crime against common law began to disappear. Moreover, on account of their very specialised work, which demanded great freedom of action, the fighting squads soon got beyond all control. Sometimes they recruited their members rather carelessly, and ran the risk of degenerating into mere bands terrorising not so much the authorities as the populace.

It is unnecessary to add that in such cases the proceeds of expropriations went mainly or exclusively into the pockets of the expropriators.

These abuses became so frequent that the parties adopted a severe attitude towards the actions of these "partisans" or irregulars. There were two groups, the Anarchists and the Maximalists, which unreservedly approved these actions, and even considered them an essential part of their tactics. The Anarchists, who during the spring and summer of 1906 had come to occupy an important place in the movement, indulged in these acts of political and economic terrorism and expropriations of all sorts. The Maximalists were at first—before they formed their Independent League in October, 1906—an opposition group within the Social Revolutionary Party, and distinguished themselves by many a heroic deed.

In November, 1905, however, the official authorities of the Social Revolutionary Party proclaimed an end to the terror. Though the December insurrection had in practice annulled this decision, the first Congress of the Party held in December expressly condemned the expropriation of individuals.

As for the Social-Democrats, the Menshevik section, which had always been hostile to technical preparations for insurrection and had a weakness for parliamentary methods, professed to see only the bad side or the dangers of guerilla warfare. The resolution which the Mensheviks had drafted for the Stockholm Congress did not openly condemn guerilla warfare, but made a studied reference to "the de-classed elements, criminals and dregs of the town population who always take advantage of revolutionary turbulence in order to advance their anti-social aims," insisted on "the severe measures" which the people should take "against this

bacchanalia of theft and brigandage," and concluded that it was necessary "(a) to combat groups and individuals who, misusing the name of the Social-Democratic Party, sought their personal gain, (b) to avoid causing injury to the persons and private property of peaceful citizens." The resolution condemned "the 'expropriation' of money deposited in private banks and forced contributions of all sorts," "the destruction of public buildings, railways, and other State or private establishments," except when necessary from the purely military standpoint. It did not admit of the confiscation of funds in the State treasuries "except when a revolutionary government is constituted and by its orders."

The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, maintained that guerilla warfare existed as a matter of fact, and that it disorganised the reactionaries and educated the revolutionaries; they accordingly called upon the Congress to sanction the actions of the squads belonging to or adhering to the Party, as being admissible in principle and useful in the given period." They also approved the operations directed to "the seizure of funds belonging to the enemy, that is to say, the autocratic Government, in order to use them for the purposes of insurrection." They added that "the operations of the 'partisans' should be carried on under the control of the Party, in such a way as to conserve the forces of the proletariat, and only where the state of the Labour movement and of local public opinion permits." At the Congress the Menshevik draft was adopted; the Bolsheviks demanded the suppression of the passage on "the bacchanalia of theft and brigandage," and proposed the approval of the confiscation of State funds not only when a revolutionary government has been constituted, but also "on the decisions of the central or local organisation of the party." The two amendments were rejected. The con-

fiscation of State funds was thus practically prohibited.

The Stockholm resolution provoked great discontent among the Bolshevik workers, who were, as a matter of fact, compelled to carry on an armed fight against the "Black Hundreds." Consequently guerilla operations continued, but the Party committees, particularly those which were Menshevik, ceased to take any interest in them. The members of the fighting squads, who risked their lives every day for the sake of the Party, found that this very Party kept itself aloof from them. Hence the abuses and the demoralisation which very soon set in all round. In order to put an end to this situation it was recognised that relations between the fighting organisations and the Social-Democratic Party had to be defined. The Central Committee consented to convene a conference only of those organisations which carried on propaganda in the army. The Petersburg and Moscow committees (both Bolshevik) insisted on calling a much more widely representative conference to deal with all these questions: insurrection, partisans, expropriations, terror etc. They proposed that this conference be held in Finland in November.

It was just when the question of convening conferences was being discussed that Lenin wrote the following article to make his own position and that of the Bolsheviks standing nearest to the revolutionary workers quite clear.

## GUERILLA WARFARE<sup>225</sup>

The question of guerilla operations greatly interests our Party and the masses of the workers. We have on many occasions touched upon this question in passing and now we intend to fulfil our promise and to explain our views fully.

### I.

We will begin from the beginning. What fundamental demands should a Marxist present on the question of the forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all other and more primitive forms of socialism in that it does not bind the movement to any definite form of struggle. It recognises the most varied forms. It does not "invent" them, but merely generalises, organises and imbues with consciousness those forms of the revolutionary class struggle which arise spontaneously in the course of the movement. Absolutely opposed to all abstract formulæ and to doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands close attention to the mass struggle <sup>in which</sup> is proceeding, and which, with the developments of the movement, with the growth of the class-consciousness of the masses, and the growing acuteness of economic and political crises, gives rise to new and varied methods of defence and attack. Marxism does not forswear any particular form of struggle. Marxism does not under any circumstances limit itself to those

forms possible and practicable only at the present moment, but recognises the inevitability of new forms of struggle arising as social conditions change, forms hitherto unforeseen by active people in the movement. In this respect, Marxism, as it were, learns from mass practice and does not claim to teach the masses forms of struggle invented by armchair "systematisers." "We know," said Kautsky, for example, when examining the forms of the social revolution, "that future crises will produce new forms of struggle which we cannot foresee at the present time."

Secondly, Marxism demands that the question of the forms of struggle should be examined historically. To present this question apart from historically concrete circumstances indicates a failure to understand the A B C of dialectic materialism. At various stages of economic evolution, in accordance with the varying political, national, cultural and social conditions, one or another form of struggle comes to the forefront, becomes the principal form of struggle for that period, while the secondary, auxiliary forms change accordingly. The attempt to answer "Yes" or "No" to a question of particular methods of fighting, without examining in detail the concrete conditions of the given movement, means the complete abandonment of Marxism.

These are the two fundamental theoretical postulates by which we must be guided. The history of

Marxism in Western Europe provides us with innumerable examples which confirm what has been said above. European Social-Democracy at the present time regards parliamentarianism and the trade union movement as the principal forms of struggle. It recognised insurrection as a method in the past, and is quite prepared to recognise that method if a change in circumstances takes place in the future—in spite of the opinion of bourgeois Liberals like the Russian Cadets and the followers of *Bez Zaglavia (Without a Name)*.<sup>226</sup> Social-Democracy in the seventies rejected the general strike as a social panacea and as a means for the immediate overthrow of the bourgeoisie by non-political methods. But Social-Democracy fully recognises mass political strikes (particularly after the experience of Russia in 1905) as one of the means of struggle necessary in certain circumstances.<sup>227</sup> Social-Democracy recognised street barricade fighting in the forties of the nineteenth century, and for definite reasons rejected it at the end of the nineteenth century. When the experience of Moscow had, according to Karl Kautsky, given rise to new barricade tactics, Social-Democracy was quite prepared to change its opinion again and recognised barricade fighting as expedient.

## II.

Having explained the general principles of Marxism, we will now deal with the Russian revolution. Let us recall the historical development of

the forms of struggle to which it gave rise. First, we had the economic strikes of workers (1896-1900),<sup>221</sup> then the political demonstrations of workers and students (1901-1903), the peasant revolts (1902),<sup>222</sup> the beginning of mass political strikes combined with demonstrations (Rostov, 1902), the summer strikes (1903), 9th of January (1905), the all-Russian political strikes with local barricade fighting (October, 1905), mass barricade fighting and armed insurrection (December, 1905), peaceful parliamentary struggle (April-June, 1906), sporadic mutinies in the armed forces (June, 1905, July, 1906), sporadic peasant rebellions (autumn, 1905, autumn, 1906).<sup>223</sup>

Such were the forms of struggle up to the autumn of 1906. The reprisals adopted by the autocracy were the Black Hundred pogroms, beginning with Kishiniev in the spring of 1903 and ending with Siedlce in the autumn of 1906.<sup>224</sup> During the whole of this period the organisation of the Black Hundred pogroms and massacres of Jews, students, revolutionaries and class-conscious workers steadily progressed, became more perfect, combining the outrages of the corrupted mob with the violence of the Black Hundred troops,<sup>225</sup> and even including the bombardment of towns and villages and the dispatch of punitive expeditions, punitive trains etc.<sup>226</sup>

This is the general background of the struggle, against which stands out the particular secondary auxiliary phenomenon, to the examination of which

the present article is devoted. What is this phenomenon? What are its forms? What are its causes? When did it arise and how widespread is it? What is its significance in the general progress of the revolution? What is its relation to the working-class struggle organised and guided by Social-Democracy? These are the questions to which we must now turn, after having drawn the general background of the picture.

The phenomenon that interests us is armed struggle. This struggle is being conducted by individuals and by small groups. Some of them belong to revolutionary organisations, others (in certain parts of Russia, the majority) do not belong to any revolutionary organisation. The armed struggle pursues two different aims, which must be sharply distinguished one from the other. This struggle aims firstly at the assassination of individual officials and subordinates in the service of the military police; and, secondly, at the confiscation of funds from the Government and from private persons. Part of the funds thus confiscated is given to the Party, part is used for purchasing arms and for making preparations for insurrection, and part is employed for the maintenance of those engaged in the kind of fighting we are describing. The proceeds of the large expropriations (the Caucasian expropriation of over 200,000 roubles and the Moscow expropriation of 875,000 roubles) were mostly handed over to the revolutionary parties.<sup>234</sup>

The proceeds of minor expropriations are employed almost entirely for the maintenance of the expropriators. It is true that this form of struggle was only widely adopted in 1906, i.e., after the December rebellion. The development of the political crisis to the pitch of armed fighting, and the acute poverty, starvation and unemployment in the towns and villages, were undoubtedly the main causes of the rise of this method of fighting. The vagrants, the lumpenproletariat and the Anarchist groups have adopted this form of social struggle as the predominant, and even the exclusive, form. The reprisals of the autocracy consist of the declaration of martial law, the mobilisation of fresh troops, the Black Hundred pogroms (*Siedlsc*) and field courts martial.<sup>235</sup>

### III.

The method of struggle we are examining is usually condemned as Anarchism, Blanquism, as the old terror, the operations of individuals which demoralise the workers, repel wide circles of the population, disrupt the movement and damage the cause of the revolution. Examples to confirm this judgment are obtained from the news published in the newspapers everywhere.<sup>236</sup>

But are these examples convincing? In order to test this we will take the locality where this form of fighting is most prevalent—the Baltic provinces. Listen to the complaint of *Novoye Vremya* of the 8th and 12th of September against the activities of

the Lettish Social-Democrats: "The Lettish Social-Democratic Labour Party (the R.S.D.L.P.) regularly publishes a newspaper which has a circulation of 30,000. The official columns of this paper contain a list of the names of spies whom, it is said, it is the duty of every honest man to destroy. Those who help the police are described as 'enemies of the revolution' who must be executed and their property confiscated. The Social-Democratic Party instructs the population to give money to the Party only in exchange for a receipt bearing the official seal. According to the last report of the Party, 5,600 roubles out of the total income for the year of 48,000 roubles were received from the Libau branch for the purpose of buying firearms; this sum was obtained by means of expropriation." *Novoye Vremya*, of course, raves against this "revolutionary legislation," this "government of terror."<sup>227</sup>

Nobody would dare to describe these activities of the Lettish Social-Democrats as Anarchism, Blanquism or terrorism. But why? Because there is a clear connection between the new forms of struggle and the December insurrection, which is reviving again. This connection is not seen so clearly over the whole of Russia, but it exists. The connection between the guerilla warfare which became prevalent after December, and its growing acuteness as a result, not only of the economic, but also of the political crisis, undoubtedly exists. The old Russian terrorism was the work of the intellec-

tual conspirator. The guerrilla warfare of the present time, as a rule, is being conducted by the militant worker or simply by the unemployed worker.<sup>238</sup> The words *Blanquism* and *Anarchism* come easily to the minds of those who are inclined to label all phenomena, but in the state of rebellion which so clearly prevails in the Baltic provinces the uselessness of these stereotyped labels is obvious.

The example of the Letts shows how incorrect, how unscientific, how unhistorical is the customary manner of analysing guerrilla warfare apart from its connection with the state of rebellion. These circumstances must be borne in mind; the peculiar features of the intermediary period between waves of rebellion must be studied thoroughly. We must understand what forms of struggle arise under such conditions and not brush the subject aside with a few selected phrases learned by rote and repeated by the Cadets and the followers of *Novoye Vremya*: Anarchism, robbery, hooliganism!

It is said that guerrilla operations disrupt our work. Is this kind of reasoning applicable to the conditions prevailing after December, 1905, in the period of Black Hundred pogroms and the declaration of martial law? What disrupts the movement most in such a period? Is it organised guerrilla warfare or lack of resistance? Compare central Russia with the border districts of Poland and the Baltic provinces. Undoubtedly guerrilla warfare is much more widespread and more highly

developed in the western border districts. Undoubtedly, too, the revolutionary movement generally, and the Social-Democratic movement in particular, is more disorganised in Central Russia than it is in the western border districts. It does not enter our heads, of course, to conclude from this that the Polish and Lettish Social-Democratic movement is better organised, thanks to the guerilla warfare. No, the only conclusion that can be drawn from this is that guerilla warfare is not the cause of the disruption of the Social-Democratic Labour movement in Russia in 1906.

Reference is frequently made to the peculiarity of national conditions, but this only reveals more fully the weakness of this fashionable argument. If national conditions give rise to guerilla warfare then it is not Anarchism, Blanquism or terrorism which are peculiarly Russian sins, but something else. Examine this something else more concretely, gentlemen! If you do, you will see that the argument about national oppression or national antagonism explains nothing, because that has always existed in the western border countries, and guerilla warfare arose only in the present historical period. There are many places where national oppression and antagonisms prevail, but where there is no guerilla warfare, and in other places guerilla warfare breaks out even where there is no national oppression. A concrete analysis of the question will show that national oppression has nothing to

do with it; guerilla warfare is determined by the conditions of the rebellion. Guerilla warfare is an inevitable form of struggle when the mass movement has reached the stage of rebellion and when more or less prolonged intervals of time intervene between the "big battles" of the civil war.

The movement is disrupted not by guerilla operations, but by the weakness of the Party, which is incapable of controlling these operations. That is why guerilla warfare, which it has become customary to condemn among us Russians, is combined with secret, sporadic and unorganised guerilla operations, which do indeed disrupt the Party. If we fail to understand what historical conditions give rise to this struggle we shall be unable to suppress its bad aspects. Meanwhile, the fighting is going on, it is called forth by powerful economic and political causes. We are powerless to stop it. Our complaints against guerilla warfare are really complaints against the weakness of the Party in the revolution.

What we have said concerning disruption applies also to demoralisation. It is not guerilla warfare that demoralises, but the unorganised character, the lack of Party principles in such warfare that causes demoralisation. The fact that we condemn and hurl abuse at these guerilla operations does not diminish our responsibility for the undeniable demoralisation; for such condemnation and abuse are absolutely incapable of preventing actions called

forth by profound economic and political causes. It is argued that even if we are powerless to put a stop to abnormal and demoralising occurrences, it does not follow that the Party should adopt abnormal and demoralising methods of struggle. But such an argument is merely bourgeois Liberalism and not Marxism, for no Marxist can regard civil war or guerilla warfare, which is a form of civil war, as abnormal and demoralising. Marxists stand for the class war and not for social peace. In certain periods of acute economic and political crisis, the class war flares up into open civil war, *i.e.*, into a struggle between two sections of the people. At such times Marxists are obliged to adopt the point of view of civil war. Any moral condemnation of civil war is intolerable from a Marxist standpoint.

The ideal of the party of the proletariat in the period of civil war is the fighting party. This is absolutely indisputable. We are quite ready to admit that from the point of view of civil war certain forms of civil war, at certain times, may be inexpedient. We are quite ready to admit criticism of certain forms of civil war as a matter of military expediency, and we absolutely agree that the decision on this question should come from the active Social-Democrats in each district. But as Marxists we absolutely demand that the analysis of the conditions of civil war should not consist merely of worn-out and stereotyped phrases about Anarchism,

Blanquism, and terrorism, and that the senseless actions committed in the course of guerilla operations by this or that Polish Socialist Party organisation, at some time or another, shall not be used as a bogey in connection with the question as to whether Social-Democrats should take part in guerilla warfare at all."<sup>11</sup>

We must adopt a critical attitude towards the argument that guerilla warfare disrupts the movement. Every new form of struggle which is accompanied by new dangers and new sacrifices inevitably "disrupts" an organisation which is unprepared for the new form of struggle. Our old propagandist circles were disorganised by the transition to agitation work. Later our committees were disorganised by the transition to demonstrations. All military operations, in every war, introduce a certain amount of disorganisation into the ranks of the belligerents, but it does not follow from this that we should not fight. On the contrary, it shows that we must learn to fight, and that is all there is to say about it.

When I hear Social-Democrats proudly and smugly declare: "We are not Anarchists, we are not thieves and robbers, we are above all that kind of thing, we are opposed to guerilla warfare," I ask myself: Do these people understand what they are talking about? Armed skirmishes and battles between the Black Hundred Government and the population are going on all over the country. This

is inevitable in the present stage of development of the revolution. In a spontaneous and unorganised fashion, and therefore often inappropriately and badly, the population reacts by armed skirmishes and raids. I can understand that, owing to our weakness and unpreparedness, our organisations should refrain from attempting to lead this spontaneous struggle in one place or another. I quite understand that this is a matter which must be decided by the active workers on the spot, and that it is no easy thing to reorganise weak and unprepared bodies. But when I observe a Social-Democratic theoretician or publicist who instead of regretting this lack of preparedness, proudly and smugly repeats the phrases learned in his early youth about Anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism, then I feel a sense of shame creeping over me for the manner in which the most revolutionary doctrine in the world has been degraded.

It is said that guerilla warfare reduces the class-conscious proletariat to the level of degraded, drunken vagabonds. This is true. But it only proves that the party of the proletariat must never regard guerilla warfare as the only, or even the principal, method of struggle, that this method must be subordinated to other methods, put in its proper place in relation to the principal method and elevated by the educational and organisational influence of socialism. If this last condition is not fulfilled then all methods of struggle, in bourgeois

society, reduce the proletariat to the position of the various non-proletarian sections above or beneath it; and if left to the spontaneous progress of events, become out-worn, degraded and prostituted. Strikes, if left to the spontaneous progress of events, are degraded into "alliances" between workers and employers against the consumers. Parliament is degraded into a brothel where a gang of bourgeois politicians are engaged in selling—wholesale and retail—national liberty, liberalism, democracy, republicanism, anti-clericalism, socialism, and other goods for which there is a great demand. The press is degraded to a common procurer and an instrument for corrupting the masses by pandering to the low instincts of the crowd, and so on, and so on. Social-Democracy has no universal means of struggle which would separate the proletariat, as by a Chinese wall, from the sections that stand a little above or a little below it. At different times Social-Democracy employs different methods, always applying them under strictly defined ideological and organisational conditions.<sup>240</sup>

#### IV.

The forms of struggle adopted in the Russian revolution when compared with those of the bourgeois revolutions of Europe, are distinguished by their extreme variety. Kautsky partly foretold this in 1902 when he said that the coming revolution (he added: with the exception perhaps of Russia)

will be not so much a fight between the people and the Government as a fight between two sections of the people. In Russia there was certainly a much greater development of the second form of struggle mentioned above than in the bourgeois revolutions of the west. The enemies of the revolution among the people are few in number, but they are organising more and more as the struggle becomes acute, and obtain the support of the reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie. It is therefore quite natural and inevitable that in such an epoch, in the epoch of universal political strikes, insurrection cannot take the old form of simultaneous acts limited to very short periods of time and to very restricted localities. It is quite natural and inevitable for it to take the higher and more complex forms of prolonged civil war embracing the whole country, *i.e.*, of an armed struggle between two sections of the people.

Such a war cannot be conceived other than as a few big battles separated from each other by fairly long periods of time, during which numerous minor skirmishes take place. That being the case, Social-Democrats must set themselves the task of establishing organisations able to lead the masses in these big battles and as far as possible in the smaller skirmishes. When class struggles assume the acuteness of civil war, Social-Democracy must not only take part in but lead this civil war. The Social-Democrats must train and prepare their organisations to act as a fighting army, and not to miss a

single opportunity of inflicting damage on the enemy.

Needless to say, this is a difficult task. It cannot be fulfilled at a stroke. Just as the whole people are being trained and educated in the course of the civil war, so our organisations must be trained and reorganised on the basis of experience in order to be equal to this task.

We do not claim the right to dictate any particular form of struggle to the active Party workers, nor can we, sitting in our study here, decide what forms of warfare should be adopted as the civil war in Russia progresses. We do not in the least regard the various views concerning guerilla operations as a question of tendency within Social-Democracy. But we do consider it our duty to assist as far as possible in obtaining a correct theoretical estimation of the new forms of struggle thrown up in the course of events; we do consider it our duty to fight ruthlessly against stereotyped ideas and prejudices which hinder the class-conscious worker from properly understanding this new and difficult problem and from reaching its correct solution.

*Proletarii*, No. 5, September 30th, 1906.

THE ideas put forward here by Lenin did not remain abstract theory. The "Technical Bureau of the Central Committee," which had been brought under the influence of the Bolsheviks, had already, in conjunction with the Maximalists, planned and carried out the attack on the villa of the Prime Minister, Stolypin (August 12th, 1906); later, on the 13th of October, in Petersburg, it helped to rob a carriage bearing large sums belonging to the State Bank.

Nor were the principles upheld in any respect utopian: the partisans of the Caucasus, headed by the famous Kamo, never laid themselves open to criticism; while the operations of those in the Urals could even be cited as an example of the rules of conduct. As early as 1905 they organised an "armed militia," which for years held its own against the police and the Government troops. The Committees of Perm, Ekaterinburg and Ufa, made up almost entirely of Bolsheviks, had groups of five and ten, with a general staff directing operations; they organised courses in military instruction, manœuvres, an intelligence service etc. The conference of military organisations held in November at Tammerfors in Finland sanctioned this organisation. Numerous "expropriations" were carried out in this manner: the money was scrupulously entered in the books and then turned over to the Party Committee for publishing papers, maintaining "military schools," and replenishing the funds of the Central Committee. Part of the sums acquired was used to cover the expenses of the delegates sent to the London Congress.

Nevertheless, the London Congress, the Fifth Congress of the Party, held from April 20th to May 19th, 1907, where the Bolsheviks had a small majority, passed

a resolution condemning the activities of partisans as confusing and demoralising, prohibiting Party members from "all participation in or connection with operations or expropriations," and ordering the dissolution of "all special fighting groups existing in the organisations of the Party." A number of Bolsheviks, in opposition to Lenin and to the majority of their fraction, voted in favour of this resolution which was equivalent to the abandonment of all armed struggle against Tsarism and the reaction.

After the dissolution of the Duma, the Stolypin Government pursued two objects: merciless suppression of the revolution, and pacification of the general discontent by conceding a few reforms. Hence the courts martial and the encouragement given to the Black Hundreds on the one hand, and on the other, the measures directed towards the creation, in the country districts, of a class of well-to-do peasants which was to serve as a bulwark of Tsarist power in the future. Meanwhile, the coming elections had to be considered: in October, 1906, the Senate passed amendments to the Electoral Law which sensibly diminished the rights of workers, office employees and the majority of intellectuals and peasants.

As early as July, Stolypin had entered into negotiations with the representatives of moderate public opinion. He succeeded in winning over to his programme of "repression in preparation for reforms," several men who were supposed to be in the opposition. The "League of October 17th" placed itself at the service of the Government, thereby giving proof of a decided change of front in the attitude of the landed nobility.

The Liberal bourgeoisie could not fail to follow suit.

The Cadets, seeing that it was impossible to expect compromise from a government which took such a strong stand, realised that it was a case of following the path of revolution or submitting. They chose the second course. At their Helsingfors Congress held late in September, 1906, they formally disavowed their Vyborg Manifesto. Nevertheless, in the electoral campaign, some of them—the minority at Helsingfors—realising that they were losing their influence upon the people, were not averse to forming a bloc with those Social-Democrats who were willing. Their papers even opened their columns to Mensheviks like Martov and Chervanin for this purpose.

The revolutionary parties had renounced the boycott of the Duma—the Social Revolutionaries under pressure of the electors, and the Populist Socialists on their own initiative. (They had split away from the Social Revolutionaries in 1906, and were grouped around the old-established paper *Russkoye Bogatstvo*.) The Labourites, who at the time of the First Duma were only a somewhat inconsistent parliamentary fraction with no definite organisation in the country, formed themselves into a party expressly for the purpose of fighting in the coming elections. These three groups represented the more or less revolutionary and in any case democratic aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie, especially in the rural districts.

Among the Social-Democrats, too, the question discussed was no longer that of the boycott, which had been buried at the Stockholm Congress, but of the tactics to be adopted during the elections. The attitude of the majority of the Mensheviks is thus expressed by Martov in his *History of the Russian Social-Democratic Party*: “Without prejudicing the independence

of the Party in the elections, Liberalism must be solidly supported in cases where it is a choice between Liberalism and reaction, and consequently, electoral agreements must not be rejected, even in the first stage." Nevertheless, there was at first some discussion on this last point, and the Central Committee hesitated a long time before it supported the most opportunist opinion, represented by Cherevanin. The position of the Bolsheviks was expressed by Lenin in a short pamphlet entitled *Social Democracy and Electoral Agreements*, written late in October, 1906 (published in November), the first part of which is reproduced in the following pages.

## *SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND ELECTORAL AGREEMENTS*

### I.

Social-Democrats regard parliamentarism (the election of representatives to public bodies) as a means of educating, training and organising the proletariat in an independent class party, as one of the weapons of the political struggle for the emancipation of the workers. This Marxian view distinguishes Social-Democracy from bourgeois democracy on the one hand and Anarchism on the other. Bourgeois Liberals and Radicals regard parliamentarism as the natural and sole normal and legitimate method of carrying on State affairs generally; they deny the class struggle and the class character of present-day parliamentarism. The bourgeoisie exerts every effort and resorts to every trick to hoodwink the workers, to prevent them from seeing how parliamentarism is used as an instrument of bourgeois oppression, and to prevent them from understanding the historically relative significance of parliamentarism. Anarchists, too, are unable to appreciate its definitely historical significance and reject it altogether as a weapon in the struggle. That is why Social-Democracy in Russia resolutely combats both Anarchism and the efforts of the bourgeoisie to finish the revolution by coming to an arrangement with the old regime on the floor of parliament. They entirely subordinate all

their parliamentary activities to the general interests of the Labour movement and to the special tasks of the proletariat in the present bourgeois democratic revolution.

From this it follows, firstly, that the participation of the Social-Democrats in the Duma elections does not in the least bear the same character as that of other parties. Unlike the other parties, we do not attach importance to the election campaign as an end in itself, or even as something having supreme importance. Unlike other parties, we subordinate this campaign to the interests of the class struggle. Unlike the other parties we do not put forward the slogan of parliamentarism for the sake of parliamentary reforms, but the slogan of the revolutionary struggle for the Constituent Assembly, and we urge that this struggle must assume the highest forms consistent with the historical development of forms of struggle during recent years.<sup>241</sup>

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II.

What conclusions should be drawn from what has been said above concerning electoral agreements? The first is that our principal task is to develop the class consciousness and organisational independence of the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class, the only possible leader of the victorious bourgeois democratic revolution. It is therefore of prime importance to maintain our class independence throughout the whole Duma election

campaign. This does not exclude other tasks, but these must always be subordinated and adapted to it. This axiom, confirmed by Marxist theory and the whole experience of international Social-Democracy, should serve as our starting point.

It may seem that the special tasks of the proletariat in the Russian revolution directly refute this general principle. The bourgeoisie, as represented by the Octobrists, have already betrayed the revolution, or have decided to stop the revolution by means of a constitution (Cadets). The victory of the revolution is possible only if the proletariat is supported by the most progressive and intelligent of the peasant masses, whose objective conditions force them to fight and not to compromise, to complete and not to stultify the revolution. From this it may be argued that Social-Democracy must come to an agreement with peasant democracy for all stages of the elections.

But such a conclusion cannot be drawn from the absolutely correct postulate that the complete victory of our revolution is possible only in the form of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It has yet to be shown that an alliance with peasant democracy in all elections is possible and advantageous, with party relations as they are (peasant democracy is now represented not by one but by several parties), and from the point of view of the given electoral system. It has yet to be proved that by allying our-

selves with one party or another we shall be able to express and defend the interests of the real revolutionary peasantry better than by preserving the complete independence of our Party to criticise certain peasant democratic parties, and by playing off certain elements of peasant democracy against others. The fact that the proletariat stands closest to the revolutionary peasantry in the present revolution determines the general political line for Social-Democracy: with peasant democracy, against the treacherous big bourgeois democracy (Cadets). But whether this implies an immediate electoral alliance with the People's Socialist Party or with the Social Revolutionaries cannot be decided until the differences that exist between these two parties and the differences between both of them and the Constitutional Democrats are analysed, and until the present electoral system, with its numerous stages, is examined. The only thing that can be said definitely in this connection is that under no circumstances can we confine ourselves in this election to making bare and abstract contrasts between the proletariat and bourgeois democracy. On the contrary, we must concentrate our attention upon making clear distinctions, based upon facts of our revolution, between the liberal-monarchist and revolutionary democratic bourgeoisie; or, to speak more concretely, between the Constitutional Democrats, the People's Socialists and the Social Revolutionaries. Only by making such distinctions shall

we be able to determine correctly who are our closest "allies." At the same time we must not forget, firstly, that Social-Democracy must watch every one of its bourgeois-democratic allies as it would an enemy. Secondly, we shall choose what is most advantageous for us, *i.e.*, whether we shall tie our hands by a general alliance with the People's Socialists, for example, or maintain complete independence in order, at the decisive moment, to be in the position to split the non-party "Labourites" into opportunists (People's Socialists) and revolutionaries (Social Revolutionaries) and to oppose one to the other etc.

Consequently, arguments concerning the proletarian peasant character of our revolution do not justify the conclusion that we must come to an agreement with any of the peasant democratic parties at any stage of the elections to the second Duma. These arguments are not sufficient to induce us to restrict our proletarian class independence during the elections, let alone surrender that independence altogether.

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In the chapters that follow Lenin examines the position of the respective parties and the special features of the electoral system as follows:

(1) The Cadets: in view of their conduct in the First Duma the only attitude to be adopted towards them is to fight them. No alliance is possible with the Labour group because their ranks contain a mixture of Social Revolutionaries, who are really revolutionary and

republican, and of opportunist Populist Socialists, and semi-Cadets. Consequently, no agreement in the early stages of the elections, where the masses are concerned; in the later stages, in the distribution of seats, we must aim at the defeat of the Cadets by a partial agreement with the Labour group, and the defeat of the Populist Socialists by a partial agreement with the Social Revolutionaries.

(2) In the towns, the danger of splitting the opposition vote against reaction is not so great as to cause us to abstain from putting forward proletarian candidates. In the country, the revolutionary peasants are not actually affiliated to any party, so there is no advantage in co-operating with the Social Revolutionaries at the price of sacrificing the Social-Democratic programme. "In the later stages of the election, however, agreements are indispensable and possible without endangering the status of the Party, because the struggle before the masses is over, and there is no longer any risk of obscuring the independent class policy of the proletariat."

A CONFERENCE held in Finland early in November, 1906, endorsed the electoral tactics of the Mensheviks, and the Party campaign was run along those general lines. In St. Petersburg, however, this question nearly caused a split in the organisation between the advocates of the "left bloc" and the group, supported by the Central Committee, which advocated agreement with the Cadets.

In spite of government pressure, 64 Social-Democrats were elected. The majority of this parliamentary fraction were Mensheviks. From the very opening of the Duma on February 20th, 1907, the fraction aimed at an understanding with the Liberal centre in order to drive the latter towards a more open opposition; the Bolshevik deputies, however, desired a close working agreement with the peasants. When it came to electing the President of the Chamber, the majority of the fraction decided to support the Liberal opposition candidate, the Cadet Golovin. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, were opposed to him, and later refused to take part in the conference of opposition parties.

The discussion between the two groups was carried on in the legal press, which was open to them at the time; the Mensheviks had the *Narodnaya Gazeta* (*People's Newspaper*) and the Bolsheviks had *Nashe Echo* (*Our Echo*), both dailies. Finally, the Party Congress, which the Bolsheviks had been demanding for a long time, was convened, and the question of relations with bourgeois parties was one of the principal items on the agenda.

The following article was written by Lenin a few days before he left Finland for Copenhagen, where the delegates were to meet.<sup>243</sup>

## *THE QUESTION OF REVOLUTION ON 'A NATIONAL SCALE'\*\**

It is only true in a certain sense that revolution, to be successful, must be on a national scale. In order that the revolution may be victorious it is necessary to unite the overwhelming majority of the population around the demands of the revolution. This overwhelming majority must either consist of one class or of various classes having several common aims. With regard to the present Russian revolution the statement that it can be victorious only on a national scale is true, of course, in the sense that, to be victorious, the overwhelming majority of the population must take part in it.

But this exhausts the correctness of the catch-phrase "revolution on a national scale." No other conclusion can be drawn than this—what is practically a truism—that only the overwhelming majority of the people can be victorious against the organised and dominant minority. Therefore, to use this as a general formula, as a pattern and criterion of tactics is radically wrong and profoundly anti-Marxian. The term "revolution on a national scale" should indicate to a Marxist the necessity of making an exact analysis of the various interests of the various classes, which unite to fulfil certain definite and limited common tasks. In no circumstances must this term be used to tone down or screen the doctrine of the class struggle in the

process of revolution. To employ this term in such a manner would be tantamount to the complete abandonment of Marxism and a reversion to the vulgar phrase-mongering of petty bourgeois democrats or petty bourgeois socialists.

Our Social-Democratic right wing frequently forgets this. More frequently still, it forgets that with the progress of the revolution the relationships between classes in the revolution change also. As the revolution makes real progress, wider masses are drawn into the movement, and this results in greater consciousness of class interests, in more definiteness in political party groups and greater distinction in the class features of the various parties. Consequently the general, abstract, vague and confused political and economic demands give way to the concrete, precisely defined, diverse demands of various classes.

For example, the Russian revolution, like all bourgeois revolutions, necessarily opens with the general slogans, "political liberty," "welfare of the people"; but the concrete significance of these slogans became clear to the masses and to the classes only in the progress of the struggle and to the extent that practical measures are taken to introduce these "liberties" and to give definite substance to the verbal expression "democracy." Prior to and in the beginning of the bourgeois revolution everybody comes out in the name of democracy: the proletariat and the peasantry, together with the

urban petty bourgeois elements; the Liberal bourgeois, together with the Liberal landowners. Only in the process of the class struggle, only after a more or less prolonged historical development of the revolution are the various conceptions of the term "democracy," as understood by the various classes, revealed. This, too, reveals the deep abyss that separates the interests of the various classes, which demand different economic and political measures for their satisfaction, in the name of the one and only "democracy."

Only in the process of the struggle and in the course of the revolution's development does it become clear that one "democratic" class or section does not wish to go so far as another—that on the basis of the fulfilment of "common" (alleged common) tasks, a severe conflict develops concerning the methods of fulfilment—for example, as to the degree of liberty that should be given to the people, the amount of land that should be transferred to the peasantry etc.<sup>244</sup>

We must recall all these forgotten truths in order that the reader may understand the nature of the controversy that recently took place between two newspapers. The following, for example, is what one of them, the *Narodnaya Gazeta*<sup>245</sup> (*People's Newspaper*) wrote in reply to another, *Nashe Ecko* (*Our Echo*).<sup>246</sup>

"The grouping of the population into parties—that valuable political lesson and most important

political achievement of the revolution during the elections to the Second Duma,' writes *Nashe Ekho*, 'served as a striking demonstration on a national scale of the drift of large sections of the landlords and the bourgeoisie to the right.'<sup>247</sup> Quite true, but the mood and the mandates which the 'left' deputies, the Social Revolutionaries, the Trudoviks (Labourites) and the Populist Socialists<sup>248</sup> brought with them from their constituencies also 'served as a striking demonstration on a national scale,' that the 'people' at the present time are not a little imbued with Cadet 'constitutional illusions,' that the 'people' place too much hope upon the activities of the Duma as an end in itself and that they showed too much concern for safeguarding the Duma.<sup>249</sup> This the writers in *Nashe Ekho* fail to observe. They noticed whom the people elected to the Duma but they did not notice for what purpose they were elected. In the circumstances will not *Nashe Ekho* agree that in calling upon the proletariat to ignore 'national tasks' they are inviting it to isolate itself, not only from bourgeois 'society' but also from the petty bourgeois 'people'?"

This extremely instructive and remarkable tirade exposes three important errors committed by the opportunists. (1) They contrast the results of the elections with the temper of the deputies; this means to substitute the temper of the deputies for the temper of the people, to appeal from the wider, the more profound and essential to the petty, the

narrow and the derivative.<sup>230</sup> (2) The question of a firm and consistent political line and tactics of the proletariat is replaced by the registration of "moods." (3) Most important of all, in the name of the vulgar democratic fetish of "Revolution on a National Scale" an attempt is made to scare the proletariat by the danger of being "isolated" from the petty bourgeois "people."

We will deal briefly with the first two mistakes. The elections moved the masses and revealed not only their fleeting moods but their profound interest. It is not the business of Marxists to pander to fleeting moods to the neglect of class interests (expressed in the Party groupings at the elections). The deputies may be in a depressed mood, but the economic interests of the masses may give rise to a mass struggle. Therefore it may be necessary to register "moods" in order to determine the moment to be selected for some action or appeal, but not for the purpose of determining the tactics of the proletariat. To reason differently means to replace consistent proletarian tactics by a dependence upon "moods" lacking all principle. We have so far been arguing about the political line and not about the moment. The question of whether the proletariat has recovered at the present time or has not (as *Narodnaya Gazeta* thinks) is important for the purpose of determining the moment for action, but not for the purpose of determining the tactical line of action of the working class.

The third mistake is the most important: the fear that Social-Democracy, or (what is the same thing) the proletariat, will become isolated from the petty bourgeois people. This is an altogether unpardonable fear.

In so far as the Social Revolutionaries, the Trudoviks and the People's Socialists really hang at the tail of the Constitutional Democrats—and this has occurred very frequently since they voted for Golovin, following their celebrated "silence of the grave" tactics etc.<sup>231</sup>—Social-Democracy is obliged to isolate itself from the petty bourgeois people. One of two things is true. Either the wavering of the petty bourgeois people reveals the wavering nature of the petty bourgeoisie, reveals how difficult is the development of the revolution, but does not indicate that its forces are exhausted and that it has come to an end (which is the position we take), and that being so, in isolating ourselves from all the wavering and hesitations of the petty bourgeois people, the Social-Democratic proletariat trains and prepares the people for the struggle, develops its consciousness, determination, firmness etc., or the wavering of the petty bourgeois people indicates the end of the present bourgeois revolution. (We think that such a view is wrong, and no Social-Democrat has openly supported it, although the extreme right wing of Social-Democracy undoubtedly inclines towards it.) In this second case the proletariat is also obliged to isolate itself from the wavering

(or treachery) of the petty bourgeoisie in order to train the class-consciousness of the working masses and to prepare them for a more systematic, resolute and determined participation in the next revolution.

In either case the Social-Democratic proletariat is absolutely obliged to isolate itself from the petty bourgeois people who are imbued with Cadet illusions. At all events, it must conduct the firm consistent policy of a really revolutionary class and not permit itself to be scared by any reactionary class or by any reactionary or petty bourgeois tales of national tasks generally or the national tasks of the revolution.

It is possible that with a certain combination of forces or of unfavourable circumstances the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie will become imbued with servility and cowardice. This would be cowardice "on a national scale," and the Social-Democratic proletariat will isolate itself from it in the interests of the Labour movement as a whole.

*Proletarii*, No. 16, May 12th, 1907.

**T**HE Second Duma was doomed from the start; the nobility and the bureaucracy demanded its dissolution, the abolition of the law of December 11th, 1905, and the return to the regime of August 6th (1905—Bulygin Duma), with an advisory parliament. Throughout the whole session sinister rumours were current regarding the fate of the "constitution."

The Duma cannot be accused of giving the Government any pretext for suppressing it. Even the Social-Democratic group, composed largely of Mensheviks, showed signs of conciliation. The Cadet Party, living in dread of the impending dissolution, had but one policy—to postpone all burning questions and to confine the activity of the Duma to the discussion of Bills and minor reforms submitted by the Government. But the more passive it became, the more aggressive became the reactionaries, and the Cadets were ultimately forced into the dilemma of having to choose between revolution or order. Finally, on June 1st, the Government demanded that the Duma expel the 55 members of the Social-Democratic fraction, and authorised the arrest of 16 of them, who were accused of having carried on propaganda in the army. The majority, of course, did not refuse the request, but submitted the question to a commission. This was all the Government wanted. On June 3rd the Duma was dissolved. At the same time a new electoral law was promulgated which slightly diminished the total number of deputies, but reduced the number of workers' and peasants' representatives by about half, to the advantage of the electoral college ("curia") of large land-holders.

This was a complete triumph for the reaction. The law of June 3rd was accepted almost everywhere as a

veritable *coup d'état*. The new electoral law deprived the greater part of Russia in Asia of any representation, reduced the number of seats allotted to Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Poland from 105 to 32, merged the large towns in the communal assemblies of the provinces, divided town inhabitants into two groups, rich and poor, etc. In European Russia the number of workers' "electors" (electing deputies to the Duma) was reduced from 208 to 112; the number of peasant electors was cut by 56 per cent. On the other hand, the number of landed proprietor electors was increased by one-third. An overwhelming majority was thus assured in the provincial assemblies formed by the electoral colleges to the large land-holders and bourgeoisie. It was almost impossible to get Social-Democratic candidates elected.

In these circumstances the question arose: was it worth while to take part in an electoral campaign that promised so little? The boycott tendencies that came to the fore at the time of the elections to the First Duma reappeared with renewed force.

The first resolution calling for a boycott of the Duma, which was to meet on November 1st, 1907, was brought up at a teachers' conference held in Finland at the end of June; as the Social-Democratic Party had not yet taken a decision on the question their representatives abstained from voting; the Social Revolutionaries voted in favour, because, as they said, they refused to be parties to an obvious falsification "of the popular will for the benefit of the most reactionary and most privileged elements."

The temptation to follow this path was very strong. Consequently, Lenin at once wrote a long article entitled, *Against the Boycott*, in which he makes a detailed study of the question.

In the first three sections of this article he points out that the fact that the Duma is ultra-reactionary does not necessarily imply that it must be boycotted. In view of past experience it is necessary to analyse the historical conditions in which the weapon of the boycott should be used. The boycott of the Bulygin Duma was a complete success. What were the circumstances of that period? (1) The Duma, that is to say, the constitutional monarchy, did not exist; what did exist was the direct revolutionary struggle. The question from the historical point of view was: will the old regime side-track the revolution on to the path of constitutional monarchy, or will the people carry it along the path of direct action? The boycott was a method employed at a time when the workers' Party had to fight to keep to the straight path of revolution, as against the zig-zag path of the Duma. At first the question was answered in the second way (through the action of the people), and Soviets were set up, later on, in the first way. The State triumphed over the December insurrection. (2) At that time a revolutionary wave of unusual force was spreading rapidly over the country. The condition necessary for active boycott is a refusal on the part of the people to recognise the existing regime, that is to say, the first stage of insurrection. (3) The boycott had the specific object of combatting the constitutional illusions that were so widespread and deeply rooted at the time.

Lenin concludes his pamphlet by refuting the final argument in favour of the boycott: the forecast of a new workers' movement, anticipated after the general textile strike, which was in preparation. The boycott, he said, might be necessary later on, but for the time being it would in no way help the movement. The

essential thing, while preparing for the elections, was to make the people understand that only a direct and general struggle would liberate them from the outrages to which they had been subject ever since the defeat of the December insurrection.

The discussion thus opened in the Bolshevik fraction continued throughout the months of June and July, 1907. Most of the members, even entire organisations, were in favour of the boycott. Kameniev in particular wrote an article in support of it. Late in July the two articles by Lenin and Kameniev were published in a pamphlet entitled, *For and Against the Boycott*, by N. Lenin and G. K-iev.

At this very time (July 21st-23rd) a national conference of the Social-Democratic Party was being held in Vyborg, Finland, to decide electoral tactics. Lenin, alone among the Bolsheviks, was in favour of participation in the elections, but owing to the stand taken by the Mensheviks, the Bund and the Polish socialists, the vote in favour of participation was carried.

## *AGAINST THE BOYCOTT<sup>\*\*</sup>*

### IV.

The conditions in which the boycott may be applied must undoubtedly be sought for in the objective state of affairs at the particular moment. Comparing the situation in the autumn of 1907 with that of the autumn of 1905<sup>\*\*\*</sup> one cannot but come to the conclusion that we have no reason to declare a boycott at the present time. Considering both the relationship between the direct revolutionary path and the constitutional-monarchist "zig-zag," and the rise in the temper of the masses, as well as the specific tasks of the struggle against constitutional illusions, the present state of affairs differs most distinctly from that of two years ago.

At that time the monarchist-constitutional change in history was nothing more than a police promise; now that change has become a fact. It would be a ridiculous fear of the truth to refuse openly to admit this fact. And it would be a mistake to conclude from the admission of this fact that the Russian revolution is completed.<sup>\*\*</sup> It is not. We have no grounds for reaching such a conclusion. It is the duty of a Marxist to fight for the straight revolutionary path of development, when such a fight is dictated by the objective state of affairs, but we repeat this does not mean to ignore the zig-zag change when that has already become defined.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> From this aspect the progress of the

Russian revolution has become clearly defined. At the beginning of the revolution we witnessed a short but extraordinarily broad and breathlessly rapid rise, followed by an extremely slow but steady decline, which began after the rebellion of October, 1905. First a period of direct revolutionary struggle of the masses, then a period of monarchist-constitutional change.<sup>256</sup>

Does this mean that this last change is the final change? Does it mean that the revolution has come to an end and that a "constitutional" period has set in? Does it mean that we must throw overboard the republican character of our programme?

Nothing of the kind. Only vulgar Liberals like our Cadets, who are ready to justify servility by the first argument that comes to their mind, would draw a conclusion of this kind. No. It means simply that, while retaining the whole of our programme and all our revolutionary views, we must adapt our direct appeals to the state of affairs prevailing at the present moment. While preaching the inevitability of revolution, systematically preparing and accumulating inflammatory material of every kind for the purpose, while carefully guarding and cultivating the revolutionary traditions of the best period of our revolution and purging them of Liberal parasitic growths, we must not refuse to do the humdrum work in a humdrum constitutional monarchy. That is all. We must prepare for a new rising of the masses, but there is no need

to plunge headlong into the stream with the slogan of the boycott.

The boycott, as we have said already, would be useful in Russia at the present time only as an active boycott. This means not merely passive abstention from voting, but to ignore the elections in order to concentrate efforts upon the task of direct pressure. In this sense boycott is a call for energetic and determined attack.<sup>257</sup> Is the rising temper of the masses sufficiently widespread and general at the present time to justify such a call? No, certainly not.

As far as "calls" are concerned, the difference between the state of affairs to-day and that of the autumn of 1905 stands out particularly clearly. As we have pointed out already, during the whole year preceding the autumn of 1905 not a single call was ignored by the masses.<sup>258</sup> The energy of the masses ran aggressively ahead of the appeals of the organisations. Now we are in the midst of a lull in the revolution, and a number of appeals have met with no response from the masses. This was the case with the call to sweep away the Witte Duma (early in 1906);<sup>259</sup> this was the case with the call to revolt after the dissolution of the first Duma (the summer of 1906)<sup>260</sup> and with the call to action following the dissolution of the Second Duma and the *coup d'état* of June 3rd, 1907.<sup>261</sup> Read the leaflet issued by our Central Committee concerning these last actions. In that leaflet you will find a direct call to struggle, in

the form possible in the different localities (demonstrations, strikes, open armed fighting against absolutism). This was a verbal appeal. The mutinies in Kiev and in the Black Sea fleet in June, 1907, were an appeal through the medium of action. Neither of them met with any response from the masses. If the most striking and direct manifestation of reactionary pressure upon the revolution—the dissolution of two Dumas and the *coup d'état*—did not cause a rising at that time, then what grounds have we for expecting any response to an immediate repetition of the call in the form of proclaiming a boycott? Is it not clear that the objective state of affairs is such that a proclamation of this nature runs the risk of remaining a mere cry in the wilderness? When the fight is in progress, is expanding and growing, rushing in from all sides, then proclamations are legitimate and necessary; at such a time it is the duty of the revolutionary proletariat to hurl forth the battle-cry. But a mere battle-cry will not call forth the battle. When a number of battle-cries issued in connection with urgent matters have proved fruitless, there must be very serious grounds for launching slogans which would be senseless apart from conditions in which they would awaken response.

He who wishes to convince the Social-Democratic proletariat of the correctness of the slogan of the boycott must not allow himself to be carried away by the sound of words which, it is true, at one time

played a great and glorious revolutionary rôle. He must reflect seriously upon the objective conditions in which such slogans can be proclaimed, and understand that the issue of slogans indirectly presupposes the existence of conditions for an extensive, general, powerful and rapid revolutionary rising. In periods such as the present, during a lull in the revolution, we must in no circumstances make the indirect assumption that such conditions exist. They must be clearly seen and pointed out to the whole working class, otherwise we are likely to find ourselves in the position of the man who uses big words without knowing their meaning, or of one who dares not call things by their real name.

## V.

The boycott is one of the best revolutionary traditions of the most heroic and eventful period of the Russian revolution. We said earlier that one of our tasks is to preserve these traditions carefully, to cultivate them and purge them of Liberal (and opportunist) parasites. We must deal in greater detail with this task in order to define its substance and prevent possible misinterpretations and misunderstandings.

Marxism differs from all other socialist theories by its remarkable combination of a thoroughly scientific analysis of objective conditions and the objective processes of evolution, with a determined recognition of the significance of revolutionary

energy, of the revolutionary creativeness and initiative of the masses and of individuals, groups, organisations and parties capable of seeking out and establishing contacts with the various classes. A high appreciation of the revolutionary periods in the development of mankind follows from the historical views of Marx: it is in such periods that the numerous contradictions accumulated slowly during times of so-called peaceful development are solved. It is in such periods that the parts played by the various classes in determining the forms of social life reveal themselves with the greatest precision, and the foundations of the political superstructure, maintained long after the productive system has changed, are laid down. And unlike the Liberal bourgeois theoreticians, Marx regarded such periods, not as a deviation from the "normal path," not as a manifestation of "social disease," not as a deplorable result of extreme actions and mistakes, but as the most virile, most important, and decisive moments in the history of human society.

The years 1848-49, when Marx and Engels themselves participated in mass revolutionary struggles, are the outstanding period of all their activities. This is their starting point in the endeavour to determine the future of the Labour movement and of democracy in various countries, and to this point they always return in determining the inherent character of various classes and tendencies. They

appraise them and smaller political formations, organisations, political tasks and conflicts from the point of view of that revolutionary period. It is not surprising that the intellectual leaders of Liberalism, like Sombart, whole-heartedly hate this feature in the life and works of Marx, describing it as one of a "disgruntled exile." It is just like these capitalist university parasites to ascribe to personal bitterness and the irksomeness of exile that which is an inseparable part of the whole of the revolutionary philosophy of Marx and Engels!

In one of his letters to Kugelmann, I think, Marx makes a passing remark which is extremely characteristic and particularly interesting from the point of view of the question which now engages our attention. He observes that the reactionaries in Germany have managed almost completely to obliterate from the minds of the people the recollection and the traditions of the revolutionary epoch of 1848.<sup>263</sup> In this matter of revolutionary traditions there is a striking contrast between the tasks of the reaction and the tasks of the party of the proletariat. The object of the reaction is to wipe out these traditions, to cultivate the impression that revolution is a "spontaneous outbreak of madness"—a Strivist translation of the German "das tolle Jahr" (the Mad Year).<sup>264</sup> The task of the reaction is to compel the people to forget the forms of struggle, the forms of organisations, the ideas and the slogans produced so plentifully and in such variety in the

period of revolution. Just as the dull eulogists of English middle-class snobbery, the Webbs, described Chartism, the revolutionary period of the British Labour movement, as naive and infantile, as the "wild oats" period of the Labour movement, as abnormal and undeserving of serious attention, so German bourgeois historians interpret the year 1848 in Germany. The reactionaries adopt the same attitude towards the great French Revolution, which still possesses the vitality and power to influence humanity, as is proved by the passionate hatred that even to-day is entertained towards it. In the same way our counter-revolutionaries, particularly quondam "democrats" like Struve, Miliukov, Kizevetter<sup>264</sup> and *tutti quanti*, try to out-rival each other in defiling the revolutionary traditions of the Russian revolution. Hardly two years have passed since the direct mass struggles of the proletariat won the particle of liberty about which the Liberal lackeys of the old order were so enthusiastic, and already a tendency is apparent in our literature, calling itself Liberal (!), which is cultivated in the Cadet press and devoted entirely to an attempt to prove that our revolution, our revolutionary methods of struggle, our revolutionary slogans and revolutionary traditions are vulgar, clementary, naive, spontaneous, mad etc.—even criminal. From Miliukov to Kamyshansky<sup>265</sup> *il n'y a qu'un pas!*—there is only one step. On the other hand, the successes of the reaction, which

first drove the people from the Councils of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies into the Dubassov and Stolypin Dumas,<sup>26</sup> and are now driving the people into the October Duma,<sup>27</sup> these successes are described by the heroes of Russian Liberalism as a "process of growth in constitutional consciousness in Russia."

It is the duty of Russian Social-Democrats to study our revolution most carefully and thoroughly, to explain to the masses its forms of struggle and organisation, to strengthen revolutionary traditions among the people, to imbue the masses with the conviction that only by unity and revolutionary struggle is it possible to obtain any improvement and to expose persistently the baseness of the smug Liberals who are infecting the social atmosphere with the miasma of "constitutional" servility and treachery. One day of October strike or December rebellion had, and still has, a hundred times more significance in the history of the struggle for liberty than months of servile speeches by Cadets in the Duma about irresponsible or constitutional monarchy.<sup>28</sup> We must make sure, for no one else will, that the people learn the meaning of these great, eventful and significant days in greater detail than they learn about these months of constitutional asphyxiation, praised so highly by our Liberal party and non-party democratic (*sic*) press, with the benevolent permission of Stolypin and his suite of censors and gendarmes.

There is not the slightest doubt that sympathy for the boycott is roused among many revolutionaries by the laudable desire to foster the traditions of our best revolutionary past, to enliven the joyless and drab existence of to-day with the torch of bold and determined struggle; but just because we value this tender regard for revolutionary traditions we must protest strongly against the view that by using the slogan of a special historical period we may help to revive the essential conditions of that period. It is one thing to preserve the traditions of the revolution and to utilise them in the constant work of propaganda and agitation in order to make the masses understand the conditions of a direct and offensive fight against the old society, but it is quite another thing to repeat an old slogan, torn from the conditions which gave it birth and guaranteed its success, and to employ it in entirely different conditions.

Marx, who valued revolutionary traditions very highly and ruthlessly attacked a renegade or philistine attitude towards them, nevertheless demanded from revolutionaries the ability to think and to analyse the conditions in which the old methods of struggle were applied, instead of repeating certain slogans. The "national" traditions of 1792 in France will, in all probability, always remain the model of certain revolutionary methods of fighting, but this did not prevent Marx, in his celebrated Address to the International in 1870, from warning

the French proletariat against erroneously transferring these traditions to the conditions of the new epoch."<sup>69</sup>

The same thing applies to our country. We must study the conditions in which the boycott was employed and teach the masses that the boycott is a wholly legitimate and sometimes even indispensable method to be used when the revolutionary movement is rising (whatever pedants, who take the name of Marx in vain, may say). But is there such a rise of the revolutionary movement? We must examine this question independently and answer it after a serious investigation of the facts. Our duty is to facilitate the rise of the movement to the fullest extent of our powers, and not to pledge ourselves beforehand to oppose the boycott when the time is opportune for a boycott. But it would undoubtedly be an error to consider the slogan of the boycott applicable to every bad, or even very bad, representative institution.

Examine the arguments that were used to defend the boycott in the "days of liberty,"<sup>70</sup> and you will immediately see the impossibility of transferring those arguments to the conditions prevailing at the present time.

Participation in the elections will depress the mood of the people, give the enemy an advantage, confuse the revolutionary people, help the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie to come to an agreement with Tsarism etc.—this is what we said in defence

of the boycott in 1905 and the beginning of 1906. What is the fundamental premise of these arguments which, while not always expressed, is nevertheless taken for granted in relation to those times? It is the overflowing revolutionary energy of the masses seeking and finding a direct outlet by other than "constitutional" channels; the growing offensive of the revolution against the reaction, which it would have been criminal to weaken by occupying and defending a position deliberately offered by the enemy for that purpose. Try and repeat these arguments apart from such conditions, and you will immediately hear the note of discord.

It would be equally hopeless to attempt to justify the boycott by drawing a distinction between the Second and Third Dumas. To consider that there is any real difference between the Cadets (who in the Second Duma betrayed the people into the hands of the Black Hundreds) and the Octobrists, to attach any importance to the notorious Constitution which was destroyed by the *coup d'état* of June 3rd,<sup>271</sup> would be vulgar democracy rather than revolutionary social-democracy. We have always insisted that the Constitution of the First and Second Dumas was merely a phantom, that the chatter of the Cadets was intended only to divert attention from the Octobrist character of these Dumas, that the Duma is absolutely incapable of satisfying the demands of the proletariat and the peasantry. For us the 3rd of June, 1907, was a natural and inevit-

able result of the defeat in December, 1905. We were never "enchanted" by the Duma Constitution, and therefore we suffer no disenchantment when reaction, having discarded its cloak of ornamental phrases, stands before us crude, brutal and naked. Perhaps the latter is a far better means of bringing the lick-spittle Liberals, or those groups of the population whom they have deceived, back to their senses.

Compare the Menshevik Stockholm resolution on the Duma with that of the Bolshevik London resolution on the Duma. You will see that the first is filled with pompous phrases and high-sounding words about the significance of the Duma and attaches exaggerated importance to Duma work. The second is simple, dry, sober and modest. The first resolution is imbued with the spirit of petty bourgeois solemnity on the occasion of Social-Democracy being crowned with constitutionalism ("a new rule emerging from the womb of the people" etc., and similar official falsifications). The second resolution may be paraphrased as follows: Since the cursed reaction has driven us into this damned sty we will continue to work for the revolution even here, without snivelling but also without boasting.

In defending the Duma against the boycott in the period of direct revolutionary struggle, the Mensheviks, so to speak, gave a guarantee that the Duma would be something in the nature of an

instrument of the revolution. But they have utterly failed to produce the goods. We Bolsheviks, however, if we gave any guarantees at all, promised that the Duma would be an offspring of the counter-revolution, and that nothing good could be expected of it. Our point of view has been proved correct up to now, and we may be sure that future events will further confirm it. Unless the strategy of October-December is "rectified" and adapted to the new facts, there will be no liberty in Russia.

Consequently, when I am told that the third Duma cannot be utilised in the same way as the second was utilised, and that it is of no use explaining to the masses the necessity for participating in it, I feel inclined to say: If by utilising is meant Menshevik bombast about the Duma being an instrument of the revolution etc., then of course it is of no use. But even the first two Dumas proved to be only steps towards the October Duma, and yet we utilised them for the simple and modest purpose<sup>\*\*\*</sup> (of propaganda and agitation, criticism and explanation to the masses of what was going on) for which we shall always manage to utilise even the worst sort of representative institutions. A speech in the Duma cannot bring about a revolution, and propaganda in connection with the Duma possesses no distinguishing qualities, but Social-Democracy can obtain no less, and sometimes even more, advantage from both these forms of work

than from speeches delivered in some other place or printed in some journal.

We must explain to the masses our participation in the October Duma in the same simple way. As a consequence of the defeat in December, 1905, and the failure of the attempts in 1906-1907 to repair this defeat, the reaction drove us, and will continue to drive us, into worse and worse quasi-constitutional institutions. We shall always and everywhere defend our convictions, maintain our point of view and persist in pointing out that as long as the old regime continues nothing good can be expected from it. We will prepare the conditions for a fresh advance in the movement, but until that comes about, and in order that it may come about, we must work hard and refrain from advancing slogans which are only suitable for a rising movement.

It would also be incorrect to regard the boycott as a tactical step, aligning the proletariat and a section of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy against Liberalism and reaction. The boycott is not a line of tactics, but a special means of struggle suitable to special conditions. To confuse Bolshevism with "boycottism" would be as erroneous as confusing it with "militancy."<sup>223</sup> The difference between the tactics of the Mensheviks and of the Bolsheviks has been defined with sufficient clearness, and was expressed in the different principles embodied in the resolution passed at the Third Bolshevik Congress in London in 1905, and that

passed at the Menshevik Conference in Geneva. There could have been no talk at that time of the boycott and militancy. During the elections to the First Duma, when we supported the boycott, and to the Second Duma our tactics differed greatly from those of the Mensheviks. This is universally known. They differ in all the methods of struggle employed on every field of battle, but do not create any special methods of struggle peculiar to any particular line. To defend or demand the boycott of the Third Duma because the revolutionary expectations placed in the First or Second Duma, in a "lawful," "strong," "durable" and "true" Constitution, have collapsed, would be the worst sort of Menshevism.

**T**HE *coup d'état* of June 3rd, 1907, marked the end of the revolutionary period. From that time up to the revival of the workers' movement in 1912 reaction ruled everywhere.

At the head of the Government there was a shrewd Prime Minister, Stolypin, who understood that the monarchy could not be maintained on its former feudal basis, and strove to provide it with a capitalist foundation. His policy in the rural districts was to encourage the growth of a class of well-to-do peasant proprietors who would serve as a bulwark against the revolution. In the towns he strove to bring about an alliance between the industrial and commercial interests. By this means he hoped to preserve the regime.

The Duma had its place in this plan: it served to give an appearance of constitutionalism to the system, to attract the former Liberals, the intellectuals, the Russian capitalists and foreign banking interests. The session opened on November 1st, 1907. Its make-up guaranteed sufficient docility: out of 437 deputies, 145 belonged to the right and the nationalists, 170 were Octobrists or Progressives, 78 Cadets or national groups, 14 Labourites, 15 non-party and 15 Social-Democrats. Such an assembly was more of a help than a hindrance to the Government. It supported the Government agrarian programme and all measures which, wholly or partly, favoured counter-revolution.

The workers' movement grew weaker from year to year; in 1907 there were 740,000 registered strikers (as against 1,108,000 in 1906 and 2,863,000 in 1905), while in 1908 there were only 176,000 and in 1909 64,000. The proletariat seemed to be crushed for a long time to come.

The check given to the revolutionary movement

found an immediate echo in intellectual circles, where a superficial obstruction was bound to be followed by disillusion. Talented writers began to devote their efforts to pornography. Serious thinkers revived idealist philosophy. Former Social-Democrats, like Struve, Berdaev and others, destroying what they had once worshipped and worshipping what they had once destroyed, preached a return to religion, if not to the established Church. In March, 1909, they published a collection of essays entitled *Vekhi (Landmarks)*, which may be taken as their profession of faith, and which marked the definite rupture of Liberalism with the revolutionary movement. These tendencies could not fail to penetrate the Social-Democratic Party. A. Bogdanov, member of the Central Committee, founded empirio-monism; Gorki and Lunacharsky preached a religion without a god which was none the less a withdrawal from materialism: "God," writes Lunacharsky, "is all that is human in the supreme power. . . . Let us worship the energies of humanity."

Plekhanov in a series of articles made a bitter attack on Bogdanov and Lunacharsky: Lenin set out to refute the new doctrines in a book written in 1908: *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*. But the question of the Social-Democratic attitude towards this revival of religious thought still required clarification. Consequently, when the discussion on the budget of the Holy Synod was opened in the Duma, the parliamentary group decided to intervene, and arranged a preliminary debate on the speech to be made by their spokesman, Surkov, a Bolshevik. The draft speech contained a passage in which the fraction declared themselves atheists. Some of the speakers demanded the deletion

of this passage on the grounds that such a declaration would be detrimental to propaganda work (a speaker who talked against religion in the Putilov factory had barely escaped being thrown into the boiler). Moreover, it was not the business of Social-Democracy as such; in France it was the bourgeois radicals and the Jaurèsists who made anti-clericalism the dominant issue; a doctrine like scientific socialism could be atheist, but not a political party, especially not a mass party. Others supported the passage in question on the grounds that clericalism was developing in Russia, was launching a big campaign against Social-Democracy, and the Social-Democrats must make their position clear. Finally, the statement on atheism was excluded, but the sentence declaring that religion is the opium of the people was retained.

Early in December Lenin was forced to leave his refuge in Finland, which had already become precarious, and go abroad. The *Proletarii* had also to be removed. He went to Geneva, where No. 21 of that journal appeared in February, then to Paris, where the article following was written.

## *THE WORKERS' PARTY AND RELIGION<sup>24</sup>*

The speech delivered in the Duma by deputy Surkov during the debate on the estimates of the Holy Synod, and the discussion of our Duma fraction on the draft of this speech, which we publish below, raised a question of extreme importance, particularly at the present time. Interest in all questions connected with religion has been aroused among wide circles of "society," among the ranks of the intellectuals who stand close to the Labour movement, and also among certain sections of the workers. The Social-Democrats are therefore obliged to explain their attitude towards religion.<sup>25</sup>

The philosophy of Social-Democracy is based on scientific socialism, i.e., on Marxism. As Marx and Engels frequently declared, the philosophic basis of Marxism is dialectical materialism, which has absorbed the historical traditions of eighteenth century French materialism,<sup>26</sup> and of Feuerbach in Germany (first half of the nineteenth century)—a materialism which is absolutely atheistic and strongly hostile to all religion.<sup>27</sup> Let us remember that the whole of Engels's *Anti-Dühring*, the manuscript of which was read by Marx, convicts the materialist and atheist Dühring of inconsistency in his materialism, which leaves many loopholes open for religion and religious philosophy.<sup>28</sup>

Let us remember, too, that in his work on Ludwig Feuerbach, Engels reproaches the latter with

having fought against religion not in order to destroy it, but in order to revive it, to create a new "higher" religion etc.<sup>279</sup> "Religion is the opium of the people," said Marx, and this thought is the corner-stone of the whole Marxian philosophy on the question of religion. Marxism regards all modern religions and churches, all religious organisations as organs of bourgeois reaction, serving to drug the minds of the working class and to perpetuate their exploitation.

At the same time, however, Engels frequently condemned those who, desiring to be more "left" or more "revolutionary" than Social-Democracy, attempted to introduce into the programme of the workers' party a direct profession of atheism in the sense of declaring war on religion. In 1874, speaking of the celebrated manifesto issued by the Blanquist refugees from the Commune, who were living in exile in London, Engels described their clamorous declaration of war upon religion as stupid and stated that it would be the best means of reviving religion and retarding its death. Engels accused the Blanquists of failing to understand that only the class struggle of the workers, by drawing the masses into class conscious, revolutionary, practical work, can really liberate the oppressed masses from the yoke of religion; to proclaim war on religion as a political task of the workers' party is merely to give utterance to anarchist phrases.<sup>280</sup> In 1877, in his *Anti-Dühring*, Engels ruthlessly criticised the

slightest concession that Dühring made to idealism and religion, and with equal ruthlessness condemned his pseudo-revolutionary idea of suppressing religion in socialist society. "To declare such a war on religion," said Engels, "is to out-Bismarck Bismarck,"<sup>231</sup> i.e., to repeat the stupid struggle conducted by Bismarck against the clericals (Bismarck's notorious *Kulturkampf* in the '70's of the last century against the German Catholic Centre Party, by means of police persecution of Catholicism). By this war, Bismarck only succeeded in strengthening the position of militant Catholicism<sup>232</sup> and in damaging the cause of "real culture," for he emphasised religious instead of political divisions and thereby diverted the attention of certain working class and democratic elements from the immediate tasks of the revolutionary class struggle to the most superficial and false bourgeois anti-clericalism. Engels charged Dühring, who desired to appear ultra-revolutionary, with wishing to repeat the stupid tactics of Bismarck, and called upon the workers' party to devote its attention to organising and enlightening the proletariat as a much better method of attacking religion than an adventurous political war against religion. This point of view was adopted by the German Social-Democrats who, for example, were in favour of allowing the Jesuits to reside in Germany and of repealing all police measures directed against religion.<sup>233</sup> The celebrated point in the Erfurt programme (1891) which de-

clared that "religion was a private matter," decided the political tactics of Social-Democracy on this point.<sup>284</sup>

These tactics having become a matter of routine are now giving rise to a new distortion of Marxism in the very opposite direction, in the direction of opportunism. The principles of the Erfurt programme are now being interpreted by some to mean that Social-Democracy, our party, regarding religion as a private matter, religion is therefore a private matter for us as Social-Democrats, as a party.<sup>285</sup>

While he did not directly attack those who advocated this opportunist view, Engels in 1890 thought it necessary to oppose them not in a polemical but in a positive form. This he did in a declaration in which he emphatically pointed out that Social-Democracy regards religion as a private matter in so far as the State is concerned, but not in so far as it concerns each Social-Democrat, in so far as it concerns Marxism or the workers' party.

This is the outside history of Marx's and Engels' statements on the question of religion. To those who adopt a careless attitude towards Marxism, to those who are unable or do not desire to think, it will appear a mass of senseless contradictions and vacillations; they will say that it is a mixture of "consistent" atheism and "connivance" at religion, that it wavers, devoid of all principle, between r-r-revolutionary war against god and a cowardly desire to "pander" to the religious workers, from

fear of scaring them away, etc. In the literature of the anarchist phrasemongers numerous outbursts against Marxism in this style can be found.

Those however who are at all capable of treating Marxism seriously and of pondering over its philosophical principles and the experience of international Social-Democracy, will see that the tactics of Marxism towards religion were thoroughly consistent and were carefully thought out by Marx and Engels; and that what ignoramuses and the dilettanti regard as wavering is the direct and inevitable deduction from dialectical materialism. It would be a profound error to explain the apparent "moderation" of Marxism on the question of religion by so-called tactical considerations and the desire not to scare people away etc. On the contrary, the Marxist political line of conduct on this question is directly connected with its philosophic principles.

Marxism is materialism. As such it is as ruthlessly hostile to religion as was the materialism of the Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century or of Feuerbach. This is incontestable. But the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels goes further than that of the Encyclopædists and Feuerbach in that it applies the materialist philosophy to history and social science. We must combat religion. That is the ABC of all materialism and consequently of Marxism. But Marxism is not materialism that has stopped at the ABC. Marxism goes further. It

says: we must combat religion and to enable us to do that we must explain the sources of the faith and religion of the masses from the materialist point of view. The fight against religion must not be confined to abstract preaching. The fight must be linked up with the concrete practical class movement directed towards eradicating the social roots of religion. Why do the backward sections of the urban proletariat, the majority of the semi-proletariat and the masses of the peasantry cling to religion? Because the people are ignorant, say the bourgeois progressives, the radical or bourgeois materialists. Consequently: Down with religion, long live atheism, to spread atheist views is our main task. The Marxist says: That is not true; such a view is superficial, expressing a narrow bourgeois scholasticism. It is not sufficiently profound, it is not materialist; it is an idealist interpretation of the roots of religion. In modern capitalist societies the roots of religion are principally social. The roots of religion to-day are to be found in the social oppression of the masses, in their apparently complete helplessness in face of the blind forces of capitalism which every day and every hour cause a thousand times more horrible pain and suffering to the workers than any disaster like war, earthquakes etc. "Fear created the gods."<sup>226</sup> Fear of the blind forces of capitalism, blind because they cannot be foreseen by the masses of the people, forces which at every step in the lives of the proletariat

and the small traders threaten to bring and do bring "sudden," "unexpected," "accidental," disaster and ruin, converting them into beggars, paupers, or prostitutes, and condemn them to starvation; these are the roots of modern religion which the materialist, if he desires to remain a materialist, must recognise. No educational books will obliterate religion from the minds of those condemned to the hard labour of capitalism, until they themselves learn to fight in a united, organised, systematic and conscious manner the roots of religion, the domination of capital in all its forms.

Does this mean that educational books against religion are harmful or superfluous? Not in the least. But it does mean that the anti-religious propaganda of Social-Democrats must be subordinated to their fundamental task, which is to develop a class struggle of the exploited masses against the exploiters.

Those who have not studied the principles of dialectical materialism, *i.e.*, the philosophy of Marx and Engels, may not understand (or at all events may not understand immediately) this position. What! Subordinate ideological propaganda, the propaganda of certain ideas, the fight against religion—that age-long enemy of culture and progress—to the class struggle, *i.e.*, to a struggle for definite practical aims in the sphere of economics and politics?

But this objection is just one of the many

fashionable objections that are raised against Marxism which reveal a complete lack of understanding of Marxian dialectics. The contradictions which trouble those who raise objections of this sort are the contradictions that occur in life, *i.e.*, they are dialectical, not verbal, not imaginary contradictions. To raise an impassable barrier between the theoretical propaganda of atheism, *i.e.*, the destruction of the religious faith of certain sections of the proletariat, and the successes, the progress and the conditions of their class struggles is not dialectical reasoning, but the violent and absolute separation of that which is indissolubly connected in living reality. We will give an example. The workers in a certain district and in a certain branch of industry are divided, we will assume, into a progressive section of class conscious Social-Democrats, who are, of course, atheists, and a rather backward section, which still maintains contact with the rural districts and the peasantry, which believes in God, goes to church and is perhaps under the direct influence of the local priest, who, we will also assume, has organised a Christian Labour Union. Let us assume further that the economic struggle in this district has led to a strike. The duty of the Marxist is to place the success of this strike in the forefront and to prevent the workers in the struggle from being split up into atheists and Christians. Atheist propaganda in such circumstances may be superfluous and even harmful, not from

the vulgar point of view of frightening away the backward workers or losing a seat at the elections etc., but from the point of view of the real progress of the class struggle, which in the conditions of present-day capitalist society will lead the Christian workers to Social-Democracy and atheism a hundred times more effectively than bare atheist propaganda. In the conditions described above an atheist preacher would simply play into the hands of the priests who desire nothing more than that the division among the workers as between strikers and blacklegs should be substituted by a division between atheists and Christians. The anarchist preaching irreconcilable war against God would, in such conditions, actually be helping the priests and the bourgeoisie (as indeed the anarchists always help the bourgeoisie). A Marxist must be a materialist, that is an enemy of religion, but from the materialist and dialectical standpoint, *i.e.*, he must conceive the fight against religion not as an abstraction, not on the basis of pure theoretical atheism, equally applicable to all times and conditions, but concretely, on the basis of the class struggle which is actually going on and which will train and educate the masses better than anything else. A Marxist should take into consideration all the concrete circumstances, should always be able to see the dividing line between anarchism and opportunism (this dividing line is relative, flexible, changeable, but it exists), should take care not to fall into the abstract, verbal,

empty "revolutionaryism" of the anarchist, or into the vulgar opportunism of the petty bourgeois or Liberal intellectual who shrinks from the fight against religion, who evades this task, who reconciles himself with the belief in God, who is guided not by the interests of the class struggle, but by the petty pitiful fear of offending, repelling or scaring off others, by the wise precept "Live and let live," etc.

All other questions that arise in connection with the attitude of Social-Democrats toward religion should be decided from the point of view outlined above. For example, it is frequently asked whether a clergyman may join the Social-Democratic Party, and usually this question is answered in the affirmative, without any reservations, and reference is made to the practice of Social Democratic Parties in Europe. This practice arose as a result not only of the application of Marxist doctrines to the Labour movement, but also of the special historical conditions in the West which do not exist in Russia.<sup>227</sup> (We shall refer to this later on.) Consequently, an affirmative reply would not be correct. We cannot say once and for all that a clergyman cannot, in any circumstances, become a member of the Social-Democratic Party. But on the other hand, we cannot make so positive a reply to the contrary. If a clergyman wishes to join us in political work, conscientiously carries out Party work, and does not infringe the Party programme, then he may be

accepted into the ranks of Social-Democracy, for the contradiction between the spirit and principles of our programme and the religious convictions of the clergyman, may, in the circumstances, remain a matter that concerns him alone. A political organisation cannot undertake to examine all its members to see whether there is any contradiction between their views and the programme of the Party. But of course such a case is very rare even in Europe, and in Russia is scarcely probable. If on the other hand the clergyman joined the Social-Democratic Party and concerned himself mainly with preaching his religious ideas, then, of course, he would have to be expelled. We must not only admit, we must do everything possible to attract workers who retain their belief in God into the Social-Democratic Party. We are resolutely opposed to offending their religious convictions in the slightest degree, but we attract them to our Party in order to educate them in the spirit of our programme, and in order to allow them to fight against it. We permit freedom of opinion inside the Party, but within certain limits defined by the freedom of forming groups. We are not obliged to go hand in hand with those who advocate views rejected by the majority of the Party.

Take another example. Can we in any conditions equally condemn members of the Social-Democratic Party who say: "Socialism is my religion," and who advocate views corresponding to this declara-

tion? No! Undoubtedly such a declaration is a departure from Marxism (and consequently from socialism) but the significance of this departure, its weight so to speak, varies according to circumstances. It is one thing when an agitator speaking to a working class audience uses this expression in order to make himself better understood, as a starting point for the elucidation of his views, adapting his terms to the standard of intelligence of his audience. It is quite another thing, however, for a writer to advocate "God creation" or "God creating Socialism" (like Lunacharsky and Co.). To condemn the man in the first instance would be petty, would restrict the liberty of the agitator in the employment of his "educational" methods. In the latter example, however, the Party's condemnation is absolutely necessary. For the first the formula: "Socialism is religion," is a form of transition from religion to socialism; for the second it is a transition from socialism to religion.

Let us now examine the conditions which gave rise in the west to the opportunist interpretation of the thesis: "Religion is a private matter." Here, of course, we have the influence of the causes which gave rise to opportunism generally, the sacrifice of the fundamental interests of the Labour movement for the sake of momentary advantage. The party of the proletariat demands from the State a declaration that religion is a private matter, but it does not by any means regard the question of fighting

against this opiate of the people, of fighting religious superstitions etc., "as a private matter." The opportunists misinterpret the position and make it appear that the Social-Democratic Party regards religion as a private matter.

But in addition to the usual opportunist distortions (which our Duma fraction totally failed to explain in their speeches on religion), special historical conditions have given rise to the complete indifference of European Social-Democrats to-day towards the question of religion. These conditions are two-fold. First, the anti-religious fight is the historical task of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, and the democratic bourgeoisie in the west fulfilled this task to a considerable extent during their revolutions or in their attacks on feudalism and mediævalism. Both France and Germany have their traditions of bourgeois war on religion, begun long before the ideas of socialism arose (the Encyclopædists, Feuerbach). In Russia, owing to the special conditions of the bourgeois democratic revolution, this task falls almost wholly upon the shoulders of the working class. Petty bourgeois (*Narodnik*) democracy has not done too much in this respect (as the newly arisen Black Hundred Cadets or Cadet Black Hundreds of the *Vekhi* believe) but far too little as compared with Europe.<sup>\*\*</sup>

On the other hand, the Anarchists, who, as Marxists have repeatedly pointed out, adopt the bourgeois philosophy in spite of the violence with which they

attack the bourgeoisie, have managed to give a specifically bourgeois interpretation to the traditions of the bourgeois war against religion. The Anarchists and Blanquists in the Latin countries, Johann Most (who by the way was a pupil of Dühring) and others in Germany, the Anarchists of the '80's in Austria, have carried revolutionary phrases in the war against religion to the very extreme.<sup>239</sup> It is no wonder therefore that European Social-Democrats go to the other extreme. This is explicable and to a certain extent legitimate, but we Russian Social-Democrats should not lose sight of the historical conditions in the west which brought this about.

Secondly, after the national bourgeois revolutions in the west had come to an end, after freedom of religion had been introduced more or less completely, the question of a democratic struggle against religion was forced into the background by the fight between bourgeois democracy and socialism, to such an extent that the bourgeois governments deliberately tried to distract the attention of the masses from socialism by organising a quasi-Liberal "campaign" against clericalism. This was the essence of the *Kulturkampf* in Germany and the bourgeois republican war against clericalism in France. The present indifference to the fight against religion among western Social-Democrats was preceded by bourgeois anti-clericalism, used as a means for distracting the attention of the workers from socialism. This, too, is explicable and legiti-

mate, for the Social-Democrats were obliged to advocate the subordination of the fight against religion to the fight for socialism, in opposition to bourgeois and Bismarckian anti-clericalism.

Conditions in Russia are altogether different. The proletariat is the leader of the bourgeois democratic revolution. The party of the proletariat must be the intellectual leader in the struggle against all forms of mediævalism, including the old official religion and all attempts to revive or reconstruct it on other lines. Engels commented with comparative mildness on the opportunism of the German Social-Democrats who substituted the workers' party's demand that the State shall declare religion a private matter by a declaration that religion was a private matter for each Social-Democrat and for the Social-Democratic Party; but it is quite clear that the adoption of this German misrepresentation by Russian opportunists deserves to be condemned a hundred times more severely.

Our fraction acted quite correctly in declaring from the tribune of the Duma that religion is an opiate for the people; and thereby created a precedent which must serve as the basis for the speeches of all Russian Social-Democrats on the question of religion. Should our deputy have gone further and developed atheistic ideas in greater detail? We think not. This might have exaggerated the significance of the fight which the party of the proletariat is carrying on against religion; it might

have obliterated the dividing line between the bourgeois and socialist fight against religion. The first thing to be done by the Social-Democratic fraction in the Black Hundred Duma was done and done well.

The second thing, which perhaps is the most important for Social-Democrats—to explain to the masses the class rôle of the church and clergy in supporting the Black Hundred Government and the bourgeoisie in their fight against the working class—was also done very well. Much can still be said on this subject, and in the subsequent speeches Social-Democrats will find material to supplement the speech of Comrade Surkov. Nevertheless, that speech was excellent and should be printed and distributed to all our Party organisations.

The third thing is to explain in detail the correct meaning of the statement so frequently misinterpreted by the German opportunists, namely, "Religion is a private matter." Unfortunately Comrade Surkov did not do this. This is the more regrettable because in the earlier work of the fraction Comrade Belusov made a mistake on this question, which was pointed out at the time in *Proletarii*. The debate in the fraction shows that the dispute about atheism eclipsed the question of the proper interpretation of the famous demand that religion be declared a private matter. We will not blame Comrade Surkov for a mistake that was

made by the whole fraction. Nay, we admit quite frankly that the whole Party is responsible for this mistake in so far as it did not sufficiently explain the question and impress upon the minds of Social-Democrats the significance of Engels's remarks concerning the German opportunists. The debate in the fraction shows that the mistake made was due to the failure to understand the question and by no means to any lack of respect for the doctrines of Marx; we are sure that the mistake will be rectified in the future work of the fractions.

We repeat that on the whole Comrade Surkov's speech was an excellent one and must be printed and distributed among the Party organisations. In discussing the speech, the fraction showed that it is conscientiously fulfilling its Social-Democratic duty. It is hoped that correspondence concerning the discussions within the fraction should appear more frequently in the Party press in order that the fraction may be brought into closer contact with the Party, that the Party may know of the difficult internal work that is being carried on by the fraction, that ideological unity may be maintained in the activities of the Party and the fraction.

*Proletarii*, No. 45, 13th (26) May, 1909.

THE spirit of discouragement which was the inevitable consequence of the defeat of the revolution showed itself in the general passivity of the workers. We have already observed the sharp drop in the number of strikers in 1908 and 1909. Nevertheless, a certain amount of animation prevailed in the economic field: during this period only the trade unions, the co-operatives and the educational organisations functioned at all, and moreover their activities were more or less tolerated by the Government. But complete indifference reigned among the masses towards politics. The members of the Party were thrown into prison, the leaders fled to other lands to escape persecution, and the workers who were revolutionary in sentiment, but lacked definite ideas or carefully thought-out convictions, withdrew into private life. Thus the ranks of the parties dwindled.<sup>290</sup>

The Social-Democratic Party was very hard hit. It suffered both in numerical and moral strength. Entire organisations disappeared: for the most part organisations composed of intellectuals. Those who were lured on at first by the glamour of revolutionary slogans were bound to drop out when hard times came; others, who, owing to their petty-bourgeois origin, actually had democratic rather than proletarian ideals, considered it useless to carry on the struggle for demands which had been fulfilled in part.

This spirit of decadence gave rise to various tendencies in every fraction of the Party.

Among the Mensheviks the question arose: Should the old Social-Democratic Party be preserved, should it continue its work on the old lines and go underground again, or should other methods be adopted? Those furthest to the right were in favour of legalisation at any

price, even at the price of renouncing the Party programme, tactics and form of organisation. The question at issue was: whether those who had left the Party could be regarded as "the most active elements of the working class," whether "the decision on questions concerning current policy and the Labour movement" should be withdrawn from the Party and referred to conferences of "social-democratic elements who at the present time are carrying on their social-democratic activities outside the Party?" This was the tendency of the "liquidators." The crisis was "not only one of organisation, but of ideas and policy." (Lenin: *On the Road*, article of February 28th, 1909.) The "liquidators" represented a majority in the fraction; nevertheless, there were symptoms of the formation of a minority which raised its voice against the majority. These were the "Mensheviks" of the Party, who were fairly strong in Moscow, and included Plekhanov.

As for the Bolsheviks, after the election of 15 Social-Democrat deputies to the Third Duma, the boycott tendency which was condemned at the Vyborg conference in July, 1907, was transformed into an "Otzovist" (*Otzovat*=recall) tendency demanding the "recall" of these deputies. In fact, the conduct of the Social-Democratic fraction justified the criticisms of timidity, inactivity and even opportunism levelled against it. At a conference held in Moscow in May, 1908, a resolution was submitted stating "that nearly six months of session has clearly demonstrated that it is impossible for the Social-Democrats to carry on any agitation or organisation . . . and that their conduct, as evidenced by the public utterances in the Duma, was not in the least revolutionary social-democratic in character." These deputies were called upon to resign as the only way "of emphasising the true nature of the Duma and the

revolutionary tactics of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia." The resolution was rejected, but it gave rise to a lively discussion. Bogdanov, one of the boycottist leaders of 1907, wrote against taking such a risky step as recalling the deputies without first exhausting every means of inducing them to adopt a better attitude, and proposed that they should be presented with an ultimatum: to render absolute obedience to the Party and the Central Committee, and to subordinate their parliamentary action to the action of the Party outside Parliament. Thus, side by side with Otzovism (immediate recall), developed Ultimatism (recall deferred until a reply to the ultimatum had been received).

Another tendency also developed in the Social-Democratic Party which affected not only tactics and organisation, but the very philosophy of Marxism. Gorki, a Social-Democrat at the time, and after him Lunacharsky, had advanced the idea that in order to be understood by the non-proletarian elements, the peasants etc., socialism must not be presented to them in the form of "rigid and cold formulæ," but must be adapted to their way of thinking, particularly to their religious mentality. To the religious man it must be said: "Are you looking for God? God is the humanity of to-morrow. Create him in common with the humanity of to-day and join our ranks." Thus the "God-seekers" in vogue at that time in intellectual society were confronted by Social-Democrats, who met them on their own ground with "God creating." Bogdanov, defender of Otzovism, was also the inventor of a philosophy which claimed to reconcile the idealism of the neo-Kantists with materialism, under the name of "empirio-monism."

The reaction in the Bolshevik fraction against these

various tendencies was very strong. Having secured a majority in the national conference held in Paris on December 21st, 1908, the fraction secured the passage of a series of resolutions which confirmed the former principles of the Party, its old revolutionary aims. One resolution stated that the tendency to "liquidate the existing Party organisation and put in its place a loosely formed group acting within legal limits" must be fought. "The illegal Party must be created and reinforced, for only under its direction is it possible to carry on advantageously agitation among the masses, Party work with and around the parliamentary fraction, and to utilise to the full legal and semi-legal organisations without prejudicing the class aims of Social-Democracy." One clause affirmed the necessity of utilising the platform of the Third Duma for revolutionary agitation.

Thus war was declared both on the liquidators and on Oztovism. *Proletarii* unceasingly criticised the latter and its acolyte Ultimatism. Finally, at the end of June, 1909 a "conference of the editorial staff and contributors of the *Proletarii*, that is to say of Bolsheviks, held at Paris, condemned these two "deviations from revolutionary Marxism" ("Bolshevism as a fraction has nothing in common with Oztovism and Ultimatism"), and also condemned those who pretend "to give to scientific socialism the character of a religious belief," that is to say, the "God-creators."

At this time the situation was serious: a split between the leaders of the Bolshevik fraction was imminent. Accordingly, Lenin frequently dealt with this subject in *Proletarii*, which was then published at Geneva. No. 46 of the paper contained a special sup-

plement giving the resolutions of the Paris conference, accompanied by an "introduction" by Lenin. In the main section of the paper the following article was published.

## *LIQUIDATING THE LIQUIDATORS<sup>21</sup>*

In a special supplement to the present number of *Proletarii* the reader will find an account of the conference of the Bolsheviks and the text of the resolutions passed by that conference. In the present article we intend to explain the significance of that conference and the secession of a small section of the Bolsheviks, from the point of view both of our fraction and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party as a whole.<sup>22</sup>

The past two years, approximately from the *coup d'état* of the 3rd of June, 1907, to the present day, have been a period of sharp change and acute crisis in the history of the Russian revolution and in the development of the Russian Labour movement and the R.S.D.L.P. The All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., which took place in December, 1908, summed up the problems of the present political situation, the state of the revolutionary movement and its future prospects, and the tasks of the Party of the working class at the present time.<sup>23</sup> The resolutions of this conference are an invaluable asset to the Party, and those Menshevik opportunists who desire at all costs to criticise them merely reveal, in a most striking manner, the impotence of their "criticism" and their inability to make any sensible, complete and systematic suggestion as an alternative solution of the problems raised in them.<sup>24</sup>

But the Party Conference gave us something more than that. It is important in the life of the Party because it indicated new ideological groupings in both fractions of the Party, among the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. It may be said without exaggeration that the whole history of our Party immediately before and during the revolution, is a history of the conflict between these two fractions. That is why new groupings are important in the life of the Party, and should be studied carefully by all Social-Democrats to appreciate the new questions that arise out of the new situation.

These new intellectual groupings may be briefly described as the manifestation of liquidationism on both the extreme flanks of the Party, and as the struggle against it. Among the Mensheviks liquidationism was clearly revealed in December, 1908.<sup>295</sup> The fight against it was conducted almost exclusively by other fractions (the Bolsheviks, the Polish and Lettish Social-Democrats and certain sections of the Bund).<sup>296</sup> Among the Menshevik party members, however, the opponents of liquidationism were barely discernible at that time as a tendency; they did not come out openly as a compact group. Among the Bolsheviks both sections were clearly defined and came out openly. One section was that of the orthodox Bolsheviks, the overwhelming majority who fought determinedly against Otzovism and carried their point of view in all the resolutions of the conference, and the

other, the minority, were the so-called Otzovists, who defended their views as a separate group, often receiving the support of the Ultimatists who wavered between them and the orthodox Bolsheviks. It has been repeatedly declared and proved that the Otzovists (and the Ultimists to the extent that they are attracted towards them) are Mensheviks the other way round, liquidators of a new type. (See *Proletarii*, particularly Nos. 39, 42 and 44).<sup>27</sup> The situation in the Party at the time of the December All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. may be described as follows: The overwhelming majority of the Mensheviks are liquidators and no protest or effort to combat them is made by the other Mensheviks in the party. Among the Bolsheviks the orthodox elements predominate, and they openly fight the Otzovist minority in their midst.<sup>28</sup>

What is liquidationism and what are its causes? Why are the Otzovists (and the God-creators, with whom we shall deal a little later) also liquidators, Mensheviks upside down. In a word, what is the social value and significance of this new grouping in our Party?

Liquidationism in the narrow sense of the word, the liquidationism of the Mensheviks, is the repudiation of the class struggle of the socialist proletariat generally and the repudiation of the hegemony of the proletariat in our bourgeois democratic revolution in particular. This repudiation

of course assumes various forms, and is made more or less deliberately, sharply and consistently. As illustrations we may quote the examples of Cherevanin and Potressov. The former appraised the rôle of the proletariat in the revolution in such a manner that the whole of the staff of *Gолос Социал-Демократии* (*The Voice of Social Democracy*), before the split that took place in it (i.e., including Plekhanov, Martov, Dan, Axelrod and Martynov) were obliged to repudiate him,<sup>299</sup> although they did so in an extremely inadequate manner; they repudiated consistent liquidationism in *Vorwärts* for the benefit of the Germans, but did not publish a single statement in the *Voice of Social Democracy* for the benefit of the Russian reader! In his article for *The Social Movement in Russia at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century* Potressov so successfully liquidated the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the Russian revolution that Plekhanov resigned from the liquidationist Editorial Board.<sup>300</sup>

From the organisational point of view, liquidationism is the repudiation of the necessity for a secret Social-Democratic Party, and consequently a repudiation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, resignation from it, fighting it in the columns of the legal press, in the legal labour organisations, in the trade unions, in co-operative societies, at congresses where Labour delegates are present etc. The history of any Party organisa-

tion in Russia during the past two years literally teems with examples of the liquidationism of the Mensheviks. We have already given a most striking example of liquidationism (in *Proletarii*, No. 41, and reprinted in the pamphlet, *The All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. of December, 1908*) in the case of the Menshevik members of the Central Committee, who deliberately tried to break up the Central Committee of the Party, and to put a stop to its activities.<sup>301</sup> As a symptom of the almost complete collapse of the secret Menshevik organisation in Russia we may point to the fact that the "Caucasian delegation" at the last Party Conference consisted almost entirely of émigrés<sup>302</sup> and that the Editorial Board of the *Voice of Social Democracy* was proclaimed by the Central Committee of the Party (in the beginning of 1908) as a separate literary group, having no contact with any organisation functioning in Russia.

The Mensheviks fail to draw the logical conclusions from all these manifestations of liquidationism. Either they conceal them or they are themselves to some extent confused and fail to understand the significance of certain facts; they become absorbed in petty details and personalities, and are incapable of generalising and understanding the meaning of what is taking place.

And the meaning of what is taking place is that in the period of bourgeois revolution the opportunist wing of the workers' party must inevitably, in

periods of crisis, collapse, must prove to be either entirely liquidationist or the captive of the liquidators. In the period of bourgeois revolution, petty-bourgeois camp-followers (*Mitläufcr* they call them in German) will always attach themselves to the proletarian party, and being the least able to understand proletarian theory and tactics, they are unable to maintain their position in the period of collapse, and are most inclined to go the full length in the direction of opportunism.<sup>303</sup> As soon as the collapse set in, numbers of the intellectual and literary Mensheviks in practice went over to the Liberals. The intellectuals poured out of the Party, and consequently it was the Menshevik organisations that suffered most.<sup>304</sup> Those Mensheviks who sincerely sympathise with the proletariat and with the proletarian class struggle, with proletarian revolutionary theory (and there always have been such Mensheviks who excused their opportunism on the ground that they desired to take into account all the changes in the situation and all the windings in the devious path of history), "again found themselves in the minority,"<sup>305</sup> a minority within the minority [*menshinstvo*—minority, hence Menshevik.—Tr], lacking the determination to fight liquidationism and the strength to carry on such a fight successfully. But the opportunist camp-followers are going further and further towards Liberalism. Plekhanov is becoming impatient with Potressov,

the *Voice of Social Democracy* is becoming impatient with Cherevanin, the Moscow Menshevik workers are becoming impatient with the intellectual Mensheviks and so forth. The Menshevik party members, the Menshevik orthodox Marxists, are beginning to break away, and in so far as they are proceeding towards the Party, circumstances will force them to go with the Bolsheviks. We must understand this situation and do our best everywhere to help separate the liquidators from the Mensheviks, to establish closer contact with the latter, not in the sense of obliterating differences in principle, but in the sense of rallying a really united workers' party, in which differences of opinion shall not hinder common efforts and a common attack in the common struggle.<sup>306</sup>

But are petty-bourgeois camp-followers of the proletariat to be found only in the Menshevik fraction? No, we have already pointed out in No. 39 of the *Proletarii*<sup>307</sup> that the Bolsheviks also have their camp-followers, as is evident by the line of argument employed by the consistent Otzovists and by the manner in which they attempt to reason out the "new" tactics. In the very nature of the case, a section of the mass workers' party, if it was of any size, could not in the epoch of bourgeois revolution avoid attracting to itself a certain number of "camp-followers" of various shades. This was inevitable even in the most developed capitalist countries after the complete accomplishment of the

bourgeois revolution, because the proletariat comes into contact with the most varied sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and is recruited more and more from their ranks. There is nothing abnormal or alarming in this so long as the proletarian party can manage to assimilate these alien elements, subordinate them in itself and not subordinate itself to them; so long as it realises in time that certain elements are indeed alien. <sup>and that</sup> ~~for~~ certain conditions they must clearly and definitely be repudiated. The difference between the two fractions in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party on this point lies in the fact that the Mensheviks have proved to be captives of the liquidators (*i.e.*, of the "camp-followers"). This is proved by the conduct of a number of Mensheviks themselves and their adherents in Moscow; by Plekhanov's separation from Potressov and resignation from the *Voice of Social Democracy*. From the very beginning the liquidationist elements of <sup>and</sup> "God-creators" among the Bolsheviks were in a small minority, immediately rendered harmless and then thrust aside.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that <sup>and</sup> ~~B~~olshevism is Menshevism upside down, that it must inevitably lead to liquidation, but of another kind. The argument of course is not about persons or separate groups, but about the direction which this tendency is taking, for it has ceased to be merely a mood and is striving to give itself organisational

form. The Bolsheviks quite definitely declared: firstly, that they wish, not to establish a separate tendency in the socialist movement, but to apply to the new conditions of our revolution the fundamental principles of the whole international revolution, of orthodox Marxian Social-Democracy; secondly, that they would manage to fulfil their duty even in the most difficult, slow, drab, everyday work, even if, after the struggle, after exhausting all the available revolutionary possibilities, history compels us to drag along the path of an "autocratic constitution." Every careful reader will find these statements in the Social-Democratic literature of 1905. These statements are of enormous importance, for they represent an obligation undertaken by the whole fraction and a deliberate choice of conduct. In order to fulfil this obligation to the proletariat it was necessary steadily to assimilate and train those who were attracted towards Social-Democracy in the days of freedom (there has even developed a "days-of-freedom type of Social-Democrat"), who were carried away by the determination, the revolutionary and "striking" character of the slogans, and those who lacked the stamina to fight in the drab days of the counter-revolution as well as in the festive days of the revolution. A section of these elements was gradually absorbed into proletarian work and acquired the Marxian philosophy. Another section merely learned by rote, but did not thoroughly

understand, a few slogans, repeated a few worn-out phrases, but were incapable of applying the old principles of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics to the changed conditions. The fate of both these sections is strikingly illustrated by the evolution of those who desire to boycott the Third Duma. In June, 1907, these represented the majority of the Bolshevik fraction, but *Proletarii* steadily conducted an anti-boycott policy. This policy was tested by practice, and within a year the Otzovists proved to be in the minority among the Bolsheviks (in the summer of 1908 14 votes against 18 in the Moscow organisation, the former stronghold of boycottism). Another year passed, during which the mistake of Otzovism was repeatedly and fully explained, and the Bolshevik fraction—and herein lies the significance of the recent Bolshevik Conference—finally liquidated these peculiar forms of liquidationism, *viz.*, Otzovism and Ultimatism.

We cannot therefore be charged with bringing about a "new split."<sup>1308</sup> In the report of our conference we explain in detail our tasks and our attitude towards the matter. We have exhausted all the possibilities and methods of persuading our dissentient comrades. We have been working on this question for more than a year and a half, but as a fraction, *i.e.*, as a union of those who think alike in the Party, we cannot work without unity on fundamental questions. To break away from a

fraction is not the same as breaking away from the Party. Those who have left our fraction are by no means deprived of the possibility of working in the Party. They will either remain "unattached," *i.e.*, outside the fraction,<sup>309</sup> and in that case they will be absorbed in the general work of the Party, or they will try to establish a new fraction, which they have a perfect right to do if they desire to defend and develop their special shade of views and tactics; in that case the whole Party will very quickly see the manifestations of those tendencies, whose ideological significance we tried to appraise above.<sup>310</sup>

The Bolsheviks must lead the Party. In order to lead it is necessary to know the road. It is necessary to cease wavering, to cease wasting time on persuading the waverers and on fighting the dissentients in the fraction. Otzovism and Ultimatism are incompatible with the work which the present situation demands from revolutionary Social-Democrats. During the revolution we learned to "speak French," *i.e.*, to introduce into the movement slogans which would advance the movement to the maximum and rouse the direct mass struggle to its maximum energy and scope. In the present period of stagnation, reaction and collapse we must learn to "speak German," *i.e.*, to work slowly (we cannot work otherwise until a fresh revival takes place), systematically and persistently, to move forward step by step and gain

ground inch by inch. Those who find this work tiresome, those who fail to understand the necessity for preserving and developing the revolutionary principles of Social-Democratic tactics on this road also, and at this turn in the road, have no right to call themselves Marxists.<sup>111</sup>

Our Party cannot make progress unless it resolutely liquidates liquidationism. Liquidationism not only includes the liquidationism of the Mensheviks and their opportunist tactics; it also includes the topsy-turvy Menshevism, Otzovism and Ultimatism, which hinders the Party from carrying out the immediate task dictated to it by the peculiar situation at present prevailing, the task of utilising the Duma platform and of rallying support in all the semi-legal and legal working-class organisations. It includes God-creation and the defence of God-creating tendencies, which run counter to the principles of Marxism. It includes also the failure to understand the Party tasks of the Bolsheviks, which in 1906-1907, consisted of overthrowing the Menshevik Central Committee<sup>112</sup> which lacked the backing of the majority of the Party (not only the Poles and the Letts, but even the Bund withheld support from the purely Menshevik Central Committee of that time). That task now is to train and rally the Party elements and to establish a really united and stable proletarian party. The Bolsheviks cleared the road for the Party by their irreconcilable fight against anti-

Party elements in 1903-1905 and in 1906-1907. The Bolsheviks must now build up the Party. They must convert the fraction into the Party, they must build up a Party by taking advantage of the positions they have won in the fractional struggle.

These are the tasks of our fraction in the present general political situation and in the situation of the R.S.D.L.P. These tasks have been outlined and developed in great detail in the resolutions of the recent Bolshevik conference. The ranks are formed for a fresh struggle. The changed conditions have been taken into account. The path has been chosen. Forward along this path! The revolutionary Social-Democratic Labour Party of Russia will rapidly become a power which no reaction can shake, which will be the leader of all the militant classes of the people in the next campaign of our revolution.

· *Proletarii*, No. 46, 11th (24th) July, 1909.

**I**N reply to the decision of the Bolshevik Conference of June, 1909, Bogdanov and Krassin published a leaflet entitled: "Report to Bolshevik Comrades by the Expelled Members of the Staff of the *Proletarii*."

The authors of this leaflet accused the *Proletarii* of considering the parliamentary group as the centre of Party activity, when on the contrary three aims should be dominant: preservation of the illegal party, extension of socialist propaganda, and theoretical and practical military preparation through schools and groups of instructors. While breaking with Otzovism, which they declared was of small advantage to the Party, they defended it against the charge of having advocated "anti-parliamentarism in general," and added: "Under a regime of acute and growing reaction the Party cannot carry on a big and striking electoral campaign, nor can it obtain representation in parliament that would be worthy of the Party. . . . In these conditions, the advantage of our participation in a pseudo-parliament becomes doubtful; in any case parliamentary action cannot be of fundamental or primary importance in the life of the Party; in any case it must not play a dominant and decisive part." Finally, the staff of the *Proletarii* is accused of having unconstitutionally broken the unity of the Bolshevik fraction.

The supplement to No. 47-48 of *Proletarii* is devoted to the analysis and refutation of the report. Although the following article in it is not signed, its contents and its tone permit us to attribute it to Lenin.

## *THE FRACTION OF OTZOVISTS AND GOD-CREATORS<sup>13</sup>*

Comrades Bogdanov and Krassin have issued a special leaflet entitled "A Report to Bolshevik Comrades by the Expelled Members of the Staff of *Proletarii*," in which they bitterly complain of their removal from the Editorial Staff and of the insults heaped upon them.

In order to reveal to the Party of the working class the kind of people these are, let us first of all examine the principles outlined in the leaflet. From No. 46 of *Proletarii* and from the supplement to that number the reader will have learned that a conference of the Editorial Staff and contributors of *Proletarii* declared Comrade Bogdanov to be one of the organisers of a new fraction in our Party with which Bolshevism has nothing in common, and repudiated "all responsibility for the political steps taken by Comrade Bogdanov." From the resolution passed by the Conference it will be seen that the fundamental differences between ourselves and the new fraction (or rather Bogdanov and his friends) which has split off from the Bolsheviks are, firstly, Otzovism and Ultimatism, and, secondly, God-creation. The views of the Bolshevik fraction regarding both these tendencies are outlined in three comprehensive resolutions.

What reply is made to this by those who bitterly complain of their dismissal?

## I.

We will start with Otzovism. The dismissed comrades first sum up the experience of parliamentary or Duma work during the past few years, justify the boycott of the Bulygin and Witte Dumas and also participation in the Second Duma, and continue:

“... All this, however, is changed in the present period of acute and growing reaction. The Party cannot now carry on big and striking election campaigns, and cannot obtain parliamentary representation that would be worthy of it.”

The very first independent argument, the first sentence not simply copied from the Bolsheviks,<sup>31</sup> reveals the bottomless pit of Otzovist sophistry. Well, think, my dear sirs: can the Party, in a period of acute and growing reaction, organise in a “big and striking” manner those “instructors’ groups and schools” for militants to which you refer on the very same page and in the very same column of your leaflet? Think, my dear sirs: can the Party obtain “representation worthy of itself” in such schools? If you were at all able to think and to reason politically, O ye unjustly dismissed, you would realise that you are talking absolute nonsense. Instead of thinking politically you clutch at a “striking” sign-board and play the Party clown. You chatter about “instructors”

schools" and about "intensifying (!) propaganda among the troops" because you, like all the political infants in the Otzovist and Ultimatist camp, regard such activity as being particularly "striking," but you are incapable of realising the conditions in which these forms of activity can be actually (and not merely verbally) carried on. You learn by rote fragments of Bolshevik slogans and phrases, but you completely fail to understand them. All work is difficult for the Party "in a period of acute and growing reaction," nevertheless it is possible for the Party to obtain parliamentary representation worthy of itself. This is proved, for example, by the experience of German Social-Democracy in the period of acute and "growing reaction," the period of the Anti-Socialist Laws.<sup>315</sup> In denying this possibility Bogdanov and Co. merely reveal their utter political ignorance. To recommend the organisation of "instructors' schools" and "intensified propaganda among the troops" in a "period of acute and growing reaction" and at the same time to deny the possibility of the Party obtaining parliamentary representation worthy of itself is to talk obvious nonsense worthy of inclusion in a collection of "howlers" in logic for the First Form. Both the organisation of instructors' schools and intensified propaganda among the troops presuppose violation of the old laws, whereas parliamentary activity does not, or only very rarely, call for the violation of

the old laws by a new social force. And now consider this question, my dear sirs: when is it easier to violate the old laws, in a period of acute and growing reaction, or in a period when the movement is on the up-grade? Think, O ye unjustly dismissed, and blush for the nonsense you utter in defending your dear Otzovists.

To continue. What kind of activity is called for when the masses are exerting greater energy and greater influence than previously upon their immediate political surroundings — parliamentary activity in compliance with the laws of the old regime, or military propaganda, which immediately and directly destroys the instrument of the material power of that regime? Think a little, my dear sirs, and you will realise that in such a situation parliamentary activity takes second place. What follows logically from this? It follows that the stronger the mass movement, the greater the energy it exerts; in other words, the more truthfully we can speak of the "acute and growing" revolutionary pressure of the people and not of "acute and growing reaction"—the more possible, inevitable and successful will be propaganda carried on among the troops and militant action really linked up with the mass movement, and not merely the work of adventurous but isolated fighters. It is precisely for this reason, O ye unjustly dismissed, that Bolshevism has been able to carry on energetic militant activity and propaganda among the troops

in the period of "acute and growing" revolutionary ascendancy; it is precisely for this reason that Bolshevism (beginning with 1907) was able in 1909 to bring about the complete separation of its fraction from that militancy which, amidst "acute and growing reaction" degenerated, and inevitably degenerated, into adventurist action."<sup>11</sup>

According to our heroes, who have learned fragments of Bolshevik phrases, everything is the other way round: the highest forms of struggle, which at no time and at no place have ever been successful unless accompanied by the direct pressure of the masses, are recommended and given first place as being "possible" in a period of acute and growing reaction, while the lower forms of struggle, which presupposed, not so much the direct violation of the laws by the mass struggle, as the utilisation of the law for the purpose of carrying on propaganda and agitation to prepare the minds of the masses for the struggle, are declared to be "impossible"!

The Otzovists and their "dismissed" henchmen have heard somewhere and learned that Bolshevism regards the direct struggle of the masses—which draws even the troops (*i.e.*, the most conservative, least mobile and least accessible to propaganda etc.) into the movement, and which transforms militant action into the real beginnings of insurrection—as a higher form of the movement, and parliamentary action without the direct mass

struggle as a lower form of the movement. The Otzovists and their supporters, like Bogdanov, have heard and learned these things by rote, but they fail to understand them, and therefore make themselves ridiculous. Higher means "striking," argue the Otzovists and comrade Bogdanov. Therefore, if I yell "more striking" I will be more revolutionary than everybody else, but to try and understand what it is all about is a suggestion of the devil!

Listen to Bogdanov's next argument (we continue the quotation from where we left off).

"... The mechanical force of the reaction breaks the contacts that have been established between the Party fraction [in the Duma] and the masses and greatly hampers the exercise of the Party's influence on the group, which makes the deputies incapable of carrying on sufficiently extensive and intensive organisational and propaganda work in the interests of the Party. With the weakening of the Party itself the danger arises of the fraction degenerating and deviating from the correct path of Social-Democracy. . . ."

Isn't that really charming? When the lower and legal forms of struggle are being discussed they try to scare us by "the mechanical force of the reaction," the "impossibility of carrying on sufficiently extensive work" and "the danger of degeneration." But when it is a question of the higher forms of class struggle, which transgress the

old laws, then "the mechanical force of the reaction" disappears, there is no "impossibility" of carrying on "sufficiently extensive" work among the masses, and, if you please, the instructors' groups and schools are in no "danger of degeneration"!

This is the best justification of the action of the Editorial Board of *Proletarii* in dismissing political workers who carry such ideas among the masses.

Get this into your heads, O ye unjustly dismissed.

It is precisely amidst acute and growing reaction, when the mechanical force of reaction really breaks our contacts with the masses, hampers our efforts to carry on sufficiently extensive work, and weakens the Party, that the specific task of the Party is to utilise the parliamentary weapon, not because the parliamentary struggle is higher than other forms of struggle—but because it really is lower than the other forms, lower, for example, than forms which draw even troops into the mass movement, which give rise to mass strikes, insurrection etc. Why should the use of this lower form of struggle become the specific task of the Party (*i.e.*, the one distinguishing the given period from other periods)? Because the stronger the force of the reaction and the weaker the ties with the masses, the more urgent becomes the task of preparing the mind of the masses (and not the task of direct action), of utilising the channels of pro-

paganda and agitation created by the old regime (and not the direct attack of the masses upon the old regime itself).

## II.

Marxists who have given the slightest thought to the philosophy of Marx and Engels, Social-Democrats who know anything at all about the history of the international socialist movement will find nothing surprising in the conversion of the lower forms of struggle into a specific weapon of the struggle at a particular historical moment. Anarchists have never been able to understand this simple fact. Now, our Otzovists and their dismissed henchmen are trying to introduce anarchist methods of thought into Russian Social-Democracy by crying (as do Bogdanov and Co.) that the *Proletarii* is dominated by the theory of "parliamentarism at all costs."

In order to show the stupid and unsocial-democratic character of Bogdanov and Co.'s reproaches it is necessary to go back again to the ABC. Think, O ye unjustly dismissed, what is it that specifically distinguishes the policy and tactics of the German Social-Democrats from the Socialist Labour Parties of other countries? It is the utilisation of parliamentarism; the conversion of bourgeois-junker (in Russian approximately Octobrist-Black Hundred) parliamentarism into an instrument of socialist education and organisation of the workers. Does this imply that parliament-

arism is a higher form of the social proletarian struggle? Anarchists all over the world think that it does. Does it imply that the German Social-Democrats stand for parliamentarism at all costs? Anarchists all over the world think that it does, and for that reason there is no enemy they hate more than German Social-Democracy, there is no target at which they love more to aim their shafts. And when our Social Revolutionaries in Russia begin flirting with the Anarchists and advertising their "revolutionariness" they invariably try to drag in the real or alleged mistakes of the German Social-Democrats as arguments against Social-Democracy.<sup>11</sup>.

To proceed. Where is the fallacy in the Anarchist argument? It is that they fail—owing to their radically wrong conception of the progress of social development—to take into account the peculiarities of the concrete political (and economic) situation in the various countries, which at given periods determines the specific instruments of struggle to be employed. As a matter of fact, the German Social-Democrats far from supporting parliamentarism at all costs, far from them subordinating everything to it, have utilised non-parliamentary instruments of struggle such as the socialist press, the trade unions, systematic mass meetings, training the youth in the spirit of socialism etc. better than any other unit in the international army of the proletariat.

What is the point then? The point is that a combination of historical circumstances in Germany has made parliamentarism the specific instrument of the struggle for a certain period—not the principal, not the highest, not the greatest and most essential instrument as compared with others, but the specific and most characteristic instrument, as compared with those employed in other countries. The ability to utilise parliament has proved to be therefore a symptom (not a condition, but a symptom) of the exemplary organisation of the whole of the socialist movement in all its branches, enumerated above.

To pass from Germany to Russia. Those who attempt to identify the conditions prevailing in the two countries are guilty of a number of flagrant errors. But let us put the question as a Marxist should; what are the specific features of the policy and tactics of Russian Social-Democrats at the present moment? The answer is: we must maintain and strengthen the illegal Party—just as we did before the revolution. We must unceasingly prepare the masses for a new revolutionary crisis—as in the period 1897-1903. We must make every effort to strengthen the Party's contacts with the masses, utilise every possible Labour organisation for the purposes of socialism—as Social-Democratic Parties do everywhere and at all times. The specific features of the present time are the attempts (and the unsuccessful attempts) of the old auto-

cracy to solve the new historical problems with the aid of the Octobrist-Black Hundred Duma.<sup>318</sup> Consequently the specific tactical task of Social-Democrats is to utilise this Duma for their own ends, for spreading the ideas of revolution and socialism. The point is not that this specific task is a particularly lofty one, that it opens up wide prospects, or that it can in any way be compared with the tasks that confronted the proletariat, for example, in 1905-6. No! The point is that it is the specific tactics to be employed now, reflecting the conditions of the present as distinct from the past and the future (for the future will certainly give rise to specific tasks more complex, higher and more interesting than that of utilising the Third Duma). It will be impossible to master the present situation, to solve all the problems with which it confronts the Social-Democratic Party, unless we fulfil the specific task of the present period, unless we transform the Black Hundred-Octobrist Duma into an instrument of Social-Democratic agitation.

The shallow Otzovists senselessly repeat the words of the Bolsheviks about taking into account the experience of the revolution. But they do not understand what they say, they do not understand that taking into account the experience of a revolution includes the advocacy of the ideals, the tasks and methods of revolution inside the Duma. The failure to defend these ideals, tasks and methods

in the Duma through the medium of our Party workers who may be, and have been, elected to it, means the failure to take the first step towards the political utilisation of the experience of the revolution (for, of course, we are not dealing here with the theoretical study of experience in books and investigations). Taking the first step does not imply fulfilment of the task. The second and third steps, *i.e.*, the transformation of the experience already gained by the masses into intellectual material for fresh historical action, are incomparably more important. But since these shallow Otzovists talk about the "inter-revolutionary" period they ought to understand (if they can think and reason like Social-Democrats) that an "inter-revolutionary" period necessitates concentration on the elementary and preliminary tasks. "Inter-revolutionary" is a term describing an unstable and indefinite situation, when the old regime, having been convinced that it is impossible to govern with the aid of the old instruments alone, strives to use a new instrument in the general conditions of the old order. This inherently contradictory and impossible attempt now being made by the autocracy must inevitably fail and will bring about a repetition of the glorious period and glorious battles of 1905. But this process is not taking place exactly as it did in the period of 1897-1903, and is not leading the people towards revolution in exactly the same way as it did prior to 1905. It is this "not

exactly" that must be understood. We must be able to vary our tactics, and to all fundamental, general, primary and most important tasks of revolutionary Social-Democracy we must add one other, not very big, but the specific task of the given moment, that of utilising the Black Hundred Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic manner.

Like every new task, this task seems more difficult than others, for it demands not merely a simple repetition of slogans learned by rote (the Otzovists and Bogdanov have not enough brains for anything else) but initiative, flexibility of mind, resourcefulness and independent work on original historical tasks. As a matter of fact, this task appears particularly difficult only to those who are incapable of thinking and working independently. In reality, like all specific tasks of the moment, it is easier than others, because the conditions of its fulfilment are given. In a period of "acute and growing reaction" it is utterly impossible to fulfil the task of organising "instructors' schools and groups" really effectively, *i.e.*, in such a manner that they will really be linked up with the mass movement and subordinated to it, because this task is presented in a stupid fashion by men who have copied the formula from a good pamphlet dealing with altogether different conditions. The task of subordinating the speeches, actions and policies of the Social-Democrats in the Third Duma to the mass party and to the interests of the masses can

be fulfilled. It is not so easy as repeating a lesson, but it can be done. However hard we try we cannot, in the present "inter-revolutionary" period, fulfil the task of organising "instructors' schools" in a Social-Democratic (and not an anarchist) manner, because altogether different historical conditions are required for its accomplishment. On the other hand, by exerting all our efforts we will fulfil (and we are already beginning to do so) the task of utilising the Third Duma in a revolutionary Social-Democratic manner. And we will fulfil it, O ye dismissed and god-forsaken Otzovists and Ultimatists, not in order to place parliamentarism on a lofty pedestal, not in order to preach "parliamentarism at all costs," but in order—after solving the "inter-revolutionary" tasks corresponding to the "inter-revolutionary" period of to-day—to proceed to the fulfilment of the higher revolutionary tasks, which will correspond to the higher, i.e., more revolutionary, period of to-morrow. .

THE supplement to No. 47-48 of the *Proletarii* did not meet with immediate success. In many organisations, even in St. Petersburg, the workers felt that the attack upon Ultimatism was too severe. At the Capri school it aroused a violent discussion. In reply, Bogdanov drew up a platform which was accepted by the majority of students and teachers. On the other hand, a small group of students declared itself "Leninist" and, on Lenin's initiative and that of the Bolshevik centre, went to Paris, where a series of "orthodox" courses was organised by Lenin, Zinoviev, Kameniev and Lozovsky.

The Capri Otzovists, Ultimatists and "God-creators" then decided to unite more closely. On December 28th, 1909, they wrote to the Central Committee to announce the formation of the Vperiod group, and to ask that this group be recognised "as a literary organisation." Among the signatories were Volski, Gorki, Lunarcharsky, Lyadov and Bogdanov. Attached to the petition was the platform drawn up by Bogdanov in the form of a pamphlet entitled: *The Present Situation and the Aims of the Party*.

The authors announced that in view of the trouble that had arisen in the Party as a result of the sudden passage from semi-legal action to complete illegality and the repugnance with which the central body regarded fractional quarrels, they had resolved "to fight for Bolshevik unity." The whole trouble, in their opinion, was due to the influence of the "old peasant and bourgeois world," and particularly to the impulse, common among militants, blindly to defy authority and recognised leaders. To remedy the situation, a proletarian philosophy must be formulated, a proletarian science and a proletarian art must be created.

Lastly, the authors of the pamphlet defended the Otzovists against the charge of being opposed to parliamentarism in general, and while expressing disagreement with them on practical issues they considered Otzovism a legitimate tendency of thought among the many tendencies in the revolutionary wing of the Party, for "diversity of tendencies in thought with unity of principles expresses the vitality and depth of our ideas."

In January, 1910, after a long interruption, a plenary session of the Central Committee was held at Paris, the principal object of which was to restore unity, already established at the Stockholm Conference, but still practically non-existent, in spite of the desire of the great majority of class-conscious workers. At this meeting an unanimous resolution was passed on "the situation in the Party" demanding the cessation of fractional struggle, and the transformation of the fractions into "tendencies which shall not interfere with the unity of action of the Party."

Nevertheless, this resolution remained a dead letter both for the Vperiod group and the liquidators. This group, which had gained the recognition it sought from the Central Committee, began its literary career by publishing a letter "To the Bolshevik Comrades" in which it stressed the disagreements more strongly than ever and accused the Leninists of "abandoning all the Bolshevik positions, one after another," and of practically going over to Menshevism.

Lenin thought it necessary to publish a reply to Bogdanov's platform. As it had been decided at the meeting of the Central Committee to cease publishing the fraction organs, the *Proletarii* and the *Voice of Social Democracy*,<sup>310</sup> the article appeared in the *Discussion Journal* (published by a staff made up of representatives from each tendency).

In the course of his article, Lenin states that even those who complain of the exaggerated importance attached to parliamentary action always return to the subject of parliament, and form a fraction on the matter. They reveal a peculiar kind of parliamentary idiocy. He compares the authors of the Report with the *Rabotcheye Dyclo* people who hypocritically deny the existence of Otzovism—they are both playing at hide and seek. How much less dangerous are the outspoken Otzovists!

He then deals with the "God-creators," who with their Otzovist friends founded a school in Capri for Party workers. They have the right to do this, says Lenin, for they represent a separate tendency and a Party organisation has accepted the patronage of this enterprise. But the intolerable thing is that they should deceive the Party by not naming the founders and organisers, Stanislas Volsky, Lunacharsky and Bogdanov, who have a whole programme of their own.

Lastly, Lenin shows that those who were excluded were excluded legitimately, and not for personal reasons, as they intimate, after being defeated on countless occasions in various meetings, and he concludes that no compromise is possible with this new fraction of petty-bourgeois origin.

# *MEMOIRS OF A PUBLICIST*<sup>20</sup>

## I.

### THE PLATFORM OF THE ADHERENTS AND CHAMPIONS OF OTZOVISM

The Vperiod group recently published in Paris a pamphlet entitled: *The Present State of the Party and the Tasks that Confront it.—A Platform Drawn up by a Group of Bolsheviks*. This is the group of Bolsheviks who were mentioned by the conference of the staff and contributors last spring as having formed a new fraction. This group, "consisting of 15 Party members—seven workers and 8 intellectuals" (as it itself announces)—now attempts to give a systematic and positive explanation of their special platform. This platform bears obvious traces of careful collective effort, directed towards smoothing over all ruggedness, softening all sharp angles, and emphasising not so much the points upon which the group disagrees with the Party as those upon which it agrees with it. This new platform is therefore the more valuable to us as the official announcement of the views of a certain tendency.

This group of Bolsheviks first of all explains what it understands by "the present historical state of our Party" (§I. pp. 3-13), and then what it "understands by Bolshevism" (§II. pp. 13-17). Evidently they understand both very badly.

Take the first question. The views of Bolsheviks (and the views of the Party) are given in the resolution on the present situation passed by the Conference of December, 1908.<sup>221</sup> Do the authors of the platform share the views expressed in that resolution? If they do, why do they not say so openly? If they do, why did they draw up a special platform and explain their particular conception of the present situation? If they do not agree, then why do they not say clearly upon what points they are opposed to the views of the Party?

The fact of the matter is that the group does not clearly understand the significance of the resolution. Unconsciously (or half consciously) it is inclined towards the views of the Otzovists, which are incompatible with this resolution. In their pamphlet the new group gives a popular interpretation of a part of this resolution while ignoring (perhaps failing to realise the importance of) the rest. "The principal factors which gave rise to the revolution of 1905 continue to operate," says the resolution. "A new revolutionary crisis is approaching (Point f.). The object of the struggle, as before, is the overthrow of Tsarism and the establishment of a republic, the proletariat must play the leading role in the struggle and strive to capture political power (Points e and j). The state of the world market and of world politics makes the international situation more and more revolutionary" (Point g). To these points the new platform gives a popular inter-

pretation, and to the extent that they agree with the Bolsheviks and the Party they properly express its views and do useful work.

But the unfortunate things are that it is necessary to emphasise that phrase "to the extent that" and that the new group fails to understand the other points in the resolution, fails to understand their connection with the rest and particularly their connection with the irreconcilable attitude towards Otzovism which is characteristic of the Bolsheviks but not of this group.

Another revolution is inevitable. The revolution must overthrow the autocracy, say the authors of the new platform. True. But that is not all that a modern revolutionary Social-Democrat must know and understand. He must understand that this revolution is approaching in a new way and therefore must be met in a new way (differently from before, not only with the weapons and methods of struggle that we employed formerly), that the autocracy is not the same thing that it was before. This is what the champions of Otzovism refuse to see. They remain obstinately one-sided and by that, in spite of themselves, they render a service to the opportunists and liquidators. By their one-sidedness they are supporting the contrary one-sidedness.

The autocracy has entered a new historical period. It is taking a step towards becoming a bourgeois monarchy; the Third Duma is an alliance of definite classes. It did not arise accidentally

but as an essential institution in the monarchical system. Nor is the new agrarian policy of the autocracy<sup>223</sup> accidental, but a necessary (necessary in the bourgeois sense) link in the chain of politics of the new Tsarism.<sup>224</sup> We are in a peculiar historical period with peculiar conditions for the rise of a new revolution. This new state of affairs cannot be met and the new revolution cannot be prepared for, if we continue to act in the old way and if we fail to utilise the Duma etc.

The Otzovists cannot understand this latter point. And the defenders of Otzovism, who call it a "legitimate opinion" (p. 28 of the pamphlet under discussion), have failed up to now to realise the connection that exists between this point and a number of ideas, such as recognition of the peculiar character of the present situation, and the effort to take this peculiar character into consideration in formulating our tactics. They constantly reiterate that we are in an inter-revolutionary period" (p. 29), that "the present situation is the trough between two waves of the revolution" (p. 32), but they totally fail to understand the peculiar nature of this trough. Unless this is understood it is impossible to prepare for the revolution and to pass over to the next wave. Preparations for the new revolution cannot be limited to a mere repetition of its inevitability. Preparations for it must consist in taking into consideration the peculiar

nature of this transitional situation in our work of propaganda, agitation and organisation.

Here is an example which illustrates the failure of these people who talk about the transitional situation to understand anything about it. "That there is no real constitution in Russia and that the Duma is merely a phantom without power or significance, is not only known to the masses of the population from experience, but is now becoming clear to the whole world" (p. 11). Compare this with the December resolution:

"The alliance of Tsarism with the Black Hundreds, the landlords and the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie was publicly recognised and sealed by the *coup d'état* of June 3rd and the establishment of the Third Duma."

Is it not clear "to all the world" that the authors of the platform fail to understand the resolution, although it has been discussed over and over, from every aspect in the Party press? They fail to understand it not because they are stupid, of course, but because their heads are filled with Otzovism and Otzovist ideas.

Our Third Duma is a Black Hundred Octobrist Duma. To say that the Octobrists and the Black Hundreds in Russia "have no power or significance (for that is practically what the authors do say) is absurd. The absence of a "real constitution," the preservation of complete power in the hands of the autocracy, does not in the least exclude the peculiar

historical situation in which this power must organise a counter-revolutionary alliance of certain classes on a national scale in public institutions of national importance, in which certain classes organise from below counter-revolutionary alliances in support of Tsarism. If the alliance between Tsarism and these classes (an alliance which strives to maintain power and revenues in the hands of the feudal landlords) is a peculiar form of class domination and the domination of the Tsar and his gang in the present transitional period, a form brought about by the bourgeois evolution of the country after the "first wave of the revolution" has ebbed, then it is useless to think of utilising this transitional period unless we utilise the tribune of the Duma. The adoption of the special tactics for utilising this tribune, from which counter-revolutionaries also make speeches, for the purpose of preparing for the revolution, is obligatory, for it arises from the peculiar historical circumstances as a whole. If, however, the Duma is but a constitutional "phantom without power or significance" then it follows that we have not reached a new stage of development in bourgeois Russia, of bourgeois monarchy and the forms of domination of the upper classes, and if that is so, then, of course, in principle the Ottovists are right."<sup>11</sup>

Do not think for a moment that the phrase we have quoted from the platform was an accidental slip of the pen. A special chapter entitled: "The

Duma" (p. 25-28) opens with the following: "All the Dumas that have existed hitherto were institutions possessing no real power or authority, nor expressing the real relations of forces in the country. The Government set them up under the pressure of the popular movement in order to divert the masses from the path of direct struggle to that of peaceful elections; and on the other hand in order to reach an understanding with those social groups who might support the government in its fight against the revolution.".... This is just a skein of tangled ideas or fragments of ideas. If the Government convened the Duma in order to come to an understanding with the counter-revolutionary classes, then the logical conclusion to be drawn from this is that the First and Second Dumas did not have any power and authority (to help the revolution) while the Third Duma has power (to help the counter-revolution). Revolutionaries may (and in certain circumstances must) refrain from participating in institutions which are powerless to help the revolution. This is indisputable. By confusing such institutions of the revolutionary period with a Duma of the "inter-revolutionary period" which has power to help the counter-revolution, the authors of the platform commit a monstrous error. They apply correct Bolshevik arguments to cases in which they do not really apply. This is nothing but a caricature of Bolshevism.<sup>326</sup>

In summing up their conception of Bolshevism, the authors of the platform advance a special point (p. 16) which as a caricature of revolutionary thought may be regarded as a classic. Here is the point in full:

"(e) Until the revolution is brought about completely, the semi-legal and legal methods of struggle of the working class, including participation in the Duma, cannot have independent and decisive significance. They are merely a means for gathering and preparing the forces for open revolution, for open mass struggle."

It follows then that after "the revolution is brought about, legal methods of struggle including parliamentarism may have independent and decisive significance!"

That is false! Even then they will not have independent and decisive significance. A piece of utter nonsense has crept into the Vperiodist platform.

It follows further that all methods of struggle except legal and semi-legal methods, *i.e.*, all illegal methods of struggle, may have independent and decisive significance before the "revolution is brought about."

That is false! There are certain illegal methods of struggle which neither after "the revolution is brought about" completely (for example secret propaganda circles) nor "before the revolution is brought about completely" (for example, seizing

the enemies' funds, releasing prisoners by violence, killing spies etc.) can have independent and decisive significance. They are merely a means etc. as is stated in the text of the platform.

Further, what revolution have the authors of the platform in mind when they say "until the revolution is brought about completely"? Obviously not the social revolution, for after the social revolution there will be no class struggle, since there will be no classes. It follows then that they are referring to the bourgeois democratic revolution. Let us now examine what the authors of the platform meant by *bringing about completely* a bourgeois democratic revolution.

Generally speaking, this term may be understood to mean two things. If it is employed in the broad sense, it means the solution of the objective historical problem of the bourgeois revolution, its "completion," i.e., the removal of the very causes which give rise to a bourgeois revolution, the completion of the whole cycle of bourgeois revolutions. In that sense the bourgeois democratic revolution in France, for example, was completed only in 1871 (it was begun in 1789). If it is employed in a narrow sense then it implies a single bourgeois revolution, one of the "waves" if you will, which beat against the old regime but fail to wash it away, and do not remove the causes of subsequent bourgeois revolutions. In this sense the revolution of 1848 in Germany was completed in

1850 or in the '50's without in the least, however, removing the causes of the revolutionary movement of the '60's. The revolution of 1789 in France was "completed," say, in 1794, without in the least removing the causes of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848.

Whether we interpret the words "until the revolution is brought about completely" in the broad or narrow sense, it is difficult to find any sense in them. It need hardly be said that it is absolutely absurd to try to predetermine the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy for the whole period during which the whole cycle of possible bourgeois revolutions in Russia is completed. As for the revolutionary wave of 1905-1907, *i.e.*, the first bourgeois revolution in Russia, the authors of the platform are themselves obliged to admit that "it (the autocracy) surmounted the first wave of the revolution" (p. 12) and that we are living in an inter-revolutionary period "between two waves of democratic revolution."

What is the cause of this hopeless and endless tangle of ideas in the platform? It is that the platform is diplomatically fenced off from Otzovism but does not escape for a moment from the circle of Otzovist ideas, does not rectify the fundamental errors of Otzovism--in fact fails to recognise them. The cause is that the Vperiodists regard Otzovism as a "legitimate shade of opinion," *i.e.*, they regard the Otzovist caricature of Bolshevism

as the correct thing, the unexcelled model. Those who have started down this path will inevitably slip into the mire of hopeless confusion. They repeat words and slogans without understanding the limits and the conditions within which they may be applied.

Why for example, did the Bolsheviks in 1906-1907 oppose the opportunists with the slogan: the revolution is not yet ended? Because the objective conditions of that time were such that there could be no talk of the revolution being completed in the narrow sense of the term. Take the period of the Second Duma; when we had the most revolutionary parliament in the world existing simultaneously with almost the most reactionary autocratic government in the world. There was no direct way out of this situation except through a *coup d'état* from above or a rebellion from below, and however much wise pedants may shake their heads now, no one could guarantee then that the government could successfully and smoothly carry out a *coup d'état* and that Nicholas II. would not break his neck in trying to do so. The slogan *The revolution is not yet ended* had at that time a vital, immediately important and practically palpable significance, for it alone expressed the actual situation towards which the objective logic of events was leading. And now, when the Otzovists themselves admit that the present situation is an inter-revolutionary one, to try to present Otzovism as a

"legitimate shade of the revolutionary wing," "until the revolution is brought about completely," indicates hopeless confusion.

In order to escape from this hopeless circle of contradictions it is no use playing at diplomacy with Otzovism, it is necessary to undermine its principles. It is necessary to adopt the point of view of the December resolution and think it out logically to the end. The present inter-revolutionary period did not come by chance. There is not the slightest doubt that we have now reached a special stage of development of autocracy, of bourgeois monarchy, of bourgeois Black Hundred parliamentarism, of a bourgeois Tsarist policy in the rural districts, and of bourgeois support for all that is counter-revolutionary. This is admittedly a transitional period between two waves of revolution. But in order to prepare for the second revolution it is necessary to appreciate the peculiarity of this period, to adapt our tactics and organisation to this transition, a dark and difficult period, but one which has been imposed upon us by the progress of the campaign. Utilising the Duma tribune and all other legal possibilities is not a very lofty method of struggle and does not produce anything "striking"; but the transitional period is transitional because the specific task of that period is to prepare and gather forces and not to fling them immediately into the fight. The task of the party at the present time is to carry on this activity, lack-

ing in brilliance though it is, to utilise all the semi-public institutions characteristic of the epoch of the Black Hundred Octobrist Duma and to preserve even on this field all the traditions of revolutionary Social-Democracy, all the slogans of its recent heroic past, the whole spirit of its work and its irreconcilable attitude towards opportunism and reformism.

We have examined the first retreat of the new platform from the tactics that were outlined in the resolution of the conference of December, 1908. We have seen that it is a retreat in the direction of the ideas of Otzovism, ideas which have nothing in common with the Marxist analysis of the present situation, or with the principal tactics of revolutionary Social-Democrats generally. We must now examine the second peculiar feature of the new platform.

This second feature is the task proclaimed by the new group of "creating and spreading among the masses a new, proletarian culture, developing proletarian science, establishing true comradely relations among the proletariat, elaborating a proletarian philosophy and directing art towards proletarian strivings and experience" (p. 17).

Here we have an example of the naive diplomacy which in the platform serves as a screen to conceal its real substance. Is it not naive to place "true comradely relations" between "science" and "philosophy"? The new group embodies in a

platform its alleged grievances and the charges it brings against other groups (primarily against the orthodox Bolsheviks) who infringe "true comradely relations"? And yet this is the real substance of this amusing point.

"Proletarian science" looks sad and forlorn in this context. First of all, we recognise only one proletarian science, Marxism. For some reason or other, the authors of the platform systematically avoid using this only exact term and always employ the phrase "scientific socialism" (pp. 13, 15, 16, 20, 21). It is well known that the direct opponents of Marxism in Russia lay claim to the latter title. Secondly, if the task of developing "proletarian science" is included in the platform, it should be stated precisely what contemporary ideological and theoretical controversies are referred to and whose side the authors of the platform intend to take. To remain silent on this score is naive cunning, for the substance of the matter is clear to everyone acquainted with the Social-Democratic literature of 1908-1909. The fight in the sphere of science, philosophy and art in our time is a fight between the Marxists and the Machists.<sup>227</sup> It is ridiculous, to say the least, to close one's eyes to this universally known fact. "Platforms" should be written to explain differences, not to gloss them over.

Our authors expose themselves completely in the passage we have just quoted. Everyone knows that actually, by "proletarian philosophy" they mean

Machism, and every sensible Social-Democrat will immediately see through this pseudonym. It was quite useless to invent this pseudonym, nor is it of any use to hide behind it. As a matter of fact the most influential literary nucleus in the new group are Machists, who regard non-Machist philosophy as non-proletarian.

If they wished to include this in their platform they should have said: the new group is composed of people who will fight against non-proletarian, *i.e.*, non-Machist theories in philosophy and art. This would have been a frank and true statement by a well known ideological tendency of its opposition to all other tendencies. If importance is attached to an ideological struggle, then there should be an open declaration of war with no attempt at concealment.

We shall call upon everybody to make a clear and unequivocal reply to the concealed declaration of philosophical war on Marxism contained in the platform. As a matter of fact the phrase about proletarian culture is only a screen to conceal the attack on Marxism. The "originality" of the new group consists in the introduction of philosophy into its programme without saying precisely which tendency in philosophy it supports.

However, it cannot be said that the real substance of the words we have quoted is wholly negative. They contain something positive which may be expressed by the single name: M. Gorki.<sup>228</sup>

Indeed it is no use trying to conceal a fact which the bourgeois press has been shouting about (and distorting), that Maxim Gorki is one of the adherents of the new group. Gorki is undoubtedly one of the great representatives of proletarian art, who has done a great deal for that art and can do much more. Every fraction in the Social-Democratic Party would be rightly proud of having Maxim Gorki as member, but to place "proletarian art" in a platform on such a ground is to brand that platform as useless, to degrade one's group to the level of a literary circle and expose its own authoritarian character. The authors of the platform argue a great deal against recognising authorities, without clearly explaining what they mean. The fact of the matter is they believe that the Bolsheviks' defence of materialism in philosophy and their fight against Otzovism is carried on by individual "authorities" (a subtle hint) whom the opponents of Machism "blindly follow." Outbursts like these are quite childish. But the Vperiodists themselves handle authorities quite improperly. Gorki is an authority on proletarian art. This is indisputable. To attempt to utilise (in the intellectual sense, of course) this authority for the purpose of strengthening Machism and Otzovism is to present an example of how authorities should not be used.

Maxim Gorki is a great asset to the cause of proletarian art in spite of his sympathies for Mach-

ism and Otzovism. In the development of the Social-Democratic proletarian movement, the platform which establishes a separate group of Otzovists and Machists in the Party, and which is specially directed to developing an alleged "proletarian" art, is harmful, for it tries to sanctify and utilise the weak aspects of the work of a great authority, who, together with his great services to the cause of the proletariat, introduces some things which are harmful. It is these latter that the platform would render permanent.

*Discussion Leaflet*, No. 1, 6th (19th), March, 1910.

## **REFERENCE NOTES**



## REFERENCE NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This article, though it appears in the *Collected Works of Lenin* (Russian edition Vol. VI, pp. 74-81), either for reasons of style or on the strength of personal recollections, cannot be attributed to Lenin with certainty as it is unsigned and the original manuscript cannot be found.

<sup>2</sup> For the discussions with the Economists see Vol I. of this series.

<sup>3</sup> Such as "freedom of criticism" (See *What is to be Done?*)

<sup>4</sup> Terms used by the *Rabotchaya Mysl*, the organ of the Economists.

<sup>5</sup> From the Russian word *khvost* meaning tail. Therefore a khvostist is one who drags at the tail of the movement.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, when the *Rabocheye Dyelo* first minimised the importance of all political activity and then suddenly approved of terrorist methods.

<sup>7</sup> A reference to the facts dealt with in the pamphlet *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward* (See Vol. I. this series).

<sup>8</sup> See *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*, Vol. I. The theory of organisation as a process was summarised in the following sentence by the editorial staff of *Iskra*: "The struggle of ideas is a process, while the organisational forms are . . . nothing but forms which must clothe an ever changing and growing substance—the progress of the Party's practical work." Lenin said the same thing concerning the theory embodied in some of Rosa Luxemburg's articles sent to *Iskra*.

<sup>9</sup> At the end of December, *Iskra* had published a second letter to the Party organisations in reply to Lenin's pamphlet.

<sup>10</sup> What Lenin wanted was a paper for the general use of all the organisations in Russia, and not merely local organs.

<sup>11</sup> January 7th, 1905.

<sup>12</sup> Dated January 28th, 1905.

<sup>13</sup> This sentence is from *What is to be Done?* just preceding the passage quoted above.

<sup>14</sup> Martov, in an article entitled *Are We Preparing as We Should?* which appeared in *Iskra*, No. 62, of March 15th, 1904, wrote: "We must record to our regret that a purely Utopian conception is gaining ground among our comrades, which may cause them to drift very far away from the class struggle of the proletariat." Indeed, "preparation for the insurrection" is being spoken of as if it were a plot entirely engineered by a "strictly secret organisation," after the model of the "French revolutionaries of 1840 and 1860." As we have seen, Lenin also hinted at this passage in his *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*.

<sup>15</sup> As is known, Rosa Luxemburg, in her articles in *Iskra* and *Neue Zeit*, had vigorously criticised Lenin's ideas on a centralist organisation of the party. See in Vol. I. of this series the note at the end of *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*.

<sup>16</sup> Here again, as in his pamphlet *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*, Lenin affirms that Martov has fallen under the influence of Martynov, that is of the Economists whom he had formerly condemned.

<sup>17</sup> The printing office had been seized on the evening of January 10th, but the proclamation was distributed next day.

<sup>18</sup> Numerous other manifestoes issued at the time by the Social-Democrats contain the same appeal to revolt.

<sup>19</sup> The organisation, which was directed by Gapon (and whose foundation had been inspired by the police chief Zubatov), was the "Russian Industrial Workers' Union."

<sup>20</sup> The article is by F. Dan.

<sup>21</sup> Dan wrote: "Are we to attack the revolution in the rear if, at the outset, it follows a course other than the one we thought it should, and if we are able to make it change that course? That would be a criminal and suicidal policy."

<sup>22</sup> In a long article, *Revolutionary Days*, Lenin wrote: "The kind of tactics the Social-Democrats should have followed towards the new leader was obvious: it should have been that of caution, wariness and distrust of Zubatov's man, but at the same time, of active participation in the strike movement when it had started (even if it were a movement started by Zubatov's man) and of energetic propaganda of Social-Democratic ideas and slogans. Such

was the tactical line followed, as seen from the above-quoted letters, by our comrades of the St. Petersburg Committee."

<sup>23</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VI, pp. 88-96.

<sup>24</sup> Parvus was born in the south of Russia but was exiled in his youth and was first active in the German Social-Democratic Party. Being an economist and theoretician of no small calibre he strenuously opposed Bernstein's revisionism in articles contributed to a number of publications. When *Iskra* was founded he joined its staff. Later, however, with Rosa Luxemburg, he took up a position against Lenin's organisational principles.

<sup>25</sup> In this letter, in which Lenin explains why he left the editorial staff of *Iskra*, he wrote as follows regarding the various publications which the opposition circulated in Russia and abroad against the decisions of the Second Congress: "To what an extent these publications have been spread abroad can be seen from the fact that our friend Parvus has himself taken the field against our idea to keep all the threads in one hand and to 'command' (sic!) the workers from far Geneva (*Aus der Weltpolitik*, V jahre, No. 48, 30.11.03). Within another two months or so, our newly-arisen enemy of autocracy will read the minutes of the Party congress and of the League and will learn how easy it is to make one's self into a laughing-stock if one takes party gossip at its face value."

<sup>26</sup> See the preceding article.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that, in re-publishing the principal articles which appeared in *Iskra* from 1903 to 1905, the Mensheviks omitted the above-mentioned article by Parvus.

<sup>28</sup> In the article under discussion, which appeared on January 27th, under the heading: "The 9th of January," Martov wrote, in conclusion: "Thus, the aim of Social-Democracy actually is not so much to *organise* the people's revolution as to *unleash* it. Potentially, the revolution exists already in the thoughts and the sentiments of the people. An outlet must be found for it in an open movement, it must be transformed into action, and this is entirely a matter of agitating and organising the masses and assuming the *political leadership of the masses*."

<sup>29</sup> The author refers to a pamphlet which was published at the end of December, 1904, entitled *The Workers and*

*the Intellectuals in our Organisations*, with a preface by Axelrod. Its publication was one of the principal motives which induced Lenin to start the publication of a Bolshevik paper (as he states in his *Letter to a Comrade* of January 4th, 1905). Lenin also wrote an article in the *Vperiod* in which he analysed and criticised this pamphlet. In his speech at the Third Congress, he again quoted this passage from Axelrod's preface.

<sup>30</sup> i.e., Martov's quoted above.

<sup>31</sup> This refers to the so-called Liberal policy pursued for a while by the Tsar and the short-lived ministry of Svia-topok-Mirsky, who, in his ministerial declaration, spoke of "the Government's confidence in the people." After January 9th, power was transferred almost entirely into the hands of General Trepov.

<sup>32</sup> This and the preceding sentences have been taken from Martov's article; the italics are Lenin's.

<sup>33</sup> At the end of January, the Moscow manufacturers, impressed by the events of the 9th of that month, presented an address to Prime Minister Witte demanding a representative regime and political liberties. Though they mentioned the "tremendous, unprecedented, one might say historic, strike of St. Petersburg," their only object was to stem, by political reforms profitable to themselves, the movement which put forth unmitigated Labour demands.

<sup>34</sup> The above was already written when we received the following interesting news from the Liberal camp. The St. Petersburg special correspondent of the German bourgeois democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung* communicated to his newspaper the following opinion on the political situation expressed by a St. Petersburg Liberal journalist: "The Liberals would be fools if they let an opportunity like this slip by. The Liberals have all the trumps in their hands for *they have managed to harness the workers to their cart*. The Government has no men, as the bureaucrats are not given an opportunity to come forward." (See *Frankf. Zeit*, 17.2.05). What sacred simplicity must reign on the Editorial Board of the new *Iskra* if at such a moment it writes about the death of Liberalism.—N.L.

<sup>35</sup> The second of these passages is preceded by the following words: "Like that of all revolutionaries, it is our business to arm the masses which have risen, but we must

not forget that the secret organisations can do very little in this respect and that . . .”

All this passage is not to be found in Martov's article as reproduced in the book published later by the Mensheviks: *Two Years of Iskra*. In *Iskra* of February 10th, No. 87, Plekhanov wrote, in exactly the same style: “In view of the state of modern military technique, the disruption of the Government is the absolutely indispensable condition for a successful insurrection” and, further, “The radical and indispensable condition for successful insurrection is an ardent desire on the part of the people to make an armed attack upon the autocracy.” This latter article was also omitted from the Menshevik book.

<sup>36</sup> *Iskra*, of March 16th, No. 12, published a “Letter from a Petersburg Comrade” describing the feelings prevailing among the workers in the following manner: “There is an insistent demand for arms. . . . There is no question of having to ‘stir up an ardent desire to arm,’ as the new *Iskra*-ists are urging, but to calm it down by saying: ‘There is plenty of time, the arms will be there, look for them yourselves. . . .’” Another letter from Petersburg published in the same issue contained the following: “This is what a class-conscious worker told me: ‘The workers listen to our propagandists, but they ask: What must we do now, immediately? . . . We will demand the convening of the Constituent Assembly but we are not going out into the street without guns or dynamite. Give us arms and Petersburg will be ours.’”

<sup>37</sup> This slogan was uttered in the manifesto which Lenin reproduced in his article, *Two Tactics*, as well as in other manifestoes, though in less imperative terms. The *Vperiod* did not stop at that: in its issue No. 11, it reproduced the *Advice and Recommendations* of General Cluseret, War Commissioner of the Paris Commune, regarding street fighting. In issue No. 14, the paper produced technical details, with drawings, of the construction of barricades.

<sup>38</sup> Martov's article quoted from *Iskra*, No. 85.

<sup>39</sup> Martov's article quoted from *Iskra*, No. 85.

<sup>40</sup> Passage from Martov's above-quoted article.

<sup>41</sup> Martov's text as reproduced in the Menshevik book: *Two Years of Iskra* is slightly different. Instead of “monarchist” it reads “legal”; instead of “to the Winter

"Palace" it reads "in the Petersburg streets"; the words "in the last fight against the Tsarist troops" are omitted; instead of "the rule of the Tsar" it reads "overthrow of the Government."

<sup>42</sup> The Party News column in *Vperiod* No. 7 contains a resolution in which the Odessa Bolsheviks demand that the Third Congress be called to "save the Party from the condition of . . . anarchy into which it has been plunged by the disruptive tactics of the minority and of the Central Committee," and an analysis of similar letters from Kiev, Kharkov and Rostov—all this under the heading: "Disruption of Local Committees."

<sup>43</sup> An article entitled *Time It Was Stopped*, published in the Party News column of *Vperiod* No. 1, concludes with the following words: "We have gone to the extreme in making concessions, in order to continue to work in the same party with the minority. Now that the Third Congress has proved a failure, and when the work of disruption affects local committees, all reasonable hope is lost. Unlike the Mensheviks, who act in an underhand manner, secretly from the Party, we must frankly declare and confirm by our acts that the Party severs all relations with these gentlemen." In a leading article, entitled *The Autocracy and the Proletariat*, we read: "The work of organisation is impossible, unless we oppose the absurd and reactionary organisation process theory."

<sup>44</sup> *History of the Peasant War in Germany*, F. Engels.

<sup>45</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VI., pp. 120-133.

<sup>46</sup> i.e., the "Economists," who believed the workers could as yet understand only economic demands.

<sup>47</sup> The Mensheviks, while disagreeing on the question of tactics, nevertheless agreed that the revolution had begun and would end in the overthrow of the autocracy.

<sup>48</sup> A group known as the Conciliators ("Primirensi") had been formed who, as in St. Petersburg, constituted a group separate from the Party.

<sup>49</sup> *Rabotcheye Dyelo* had ceased publication in March, 1902, but, as we have seen above (*One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*), Lenin considered that Martov, who was at the head of the new *Iskra* and the leader of the Mensheviks, had become a disciple of Martinov of the *Rabotcheye Dyelo*.

<sup>50</sup> The Third Congress of the Liberation League ("Osvobozhdenye"), held in March, 1905, did, in fact, endorse a programme embodying the Constituent Assembly elected by universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage, the eight-hour working day and the compulsory expropriation of the big estates. Somewhat earlier, these same demands had been adopted by the Congress of the constitutionalist members of the zemstvos. The first organisation was representative mainly of the intellectuals, and the second of the progressive landowners.

<sup>51</sup> See the preceding article: *Must We Organise the Revolution?*

<sup>52</sup> In his article, *Revolutionary Prospects*, published on March 3rd, 1905, Martynov qualified what he regarded as Lenin's idea that insurrection can be made by order as a "Tkatchovist theory of revolution." Tkatchov, in his paper, *Nabat (The Tocsin)*, published in Switzerland from 1875 to 1881, opposed both Bakunin's anarchism and Lavrov's Narodism. He took as his model the Jacobins of 1793. He envisaged revolution as the seizure of power at a pre-arranged date by a strictly centralised, disciplined and secret party, which relied upon the sympathies of all the oppressed and which would set up a provisional revolutionary government.

<sup>53</sup> Martynov did not understand. In *Iskra*, No. 95, he again referred to these passages of Engels' in exactly the same way.—Lenin resumed the discussion with greater vigour in a speech he delivered at the Third Congress on the question as to whether Social-Democrats should participate in the provisional revolutionary government, in the course of which he said: "In *Vperiod*, we have explained that Engels speaks of the danger that confronts a leader who only *post factum* realises the disparity between principles and facts, between words and deeds. Such a disparity spells his ruin, in the sense not of a material defeat but of political bankruptcy. What Engels means is that you are compelled to affirm that the revolution is a socialist one when, in reality, it is but a democratic revolution. Were we to-day to assure the Russian proletariat that we can here and now ensure its complete supremacy we should commit the same mistake that the Social Revolutionaries are committing. We Social-Democrats have always ridiculed

the mistaken assertion that the revolution is not a 'bourgeois, but a democratic one.' We have always repeated that, far from weakening the bourgeoisie, the revolution would strengthen it, but that it would create the necessary conditions of success for the proletariat in its struggle for socialism."

<sup>54</sup> Reference is made here to a circular of the Central Council of the Communist League, drafted by Marx and Engels in March, 1850, after the failure of the revolutions of 1848. This circular frequently figured in the polemics at that period.

<sup>55</sup> Varlin was one of the representatives of the International in the Paris Commune.

<sup>56</sup> Martynov admitted that, besides the hundred million peasants, there were "at least some ten million small industrial producers."

<sup>57</sup> We have already called attention to the stupidity of the idea that the proletariat, even at the worst, could force the bourgeoisie to go back.—N.L.

<sup>58</sup> This article was already set up when we received No. 93 of *Iskra*, with which we shall have to deal on another occasion.—N.L.

That number contained Martynov's article on *Revolutionary Prospects*. The author advocated the following tactical line: the actual revolution being a bourgeois revolution, the party of the proletariat must not join any provisional government, lest it (the Party) be discredited, but should confine itself to the rôle of revolutionary opposition.

<sup>59</sup> To one of his later articles Lenin gave the title: *Revolution as a Teacher*.

<sup>60</sup> Lenin expressed the same idea in his pamphlet, *The Two Tactical Lines of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, published in July, 1905: "We must not be afraid (as is Martynov) of a complete victory of Social-Democracy in a democratic revolution, that is, of a democratic and revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants, for such a victory will enable us to rouse Europe, while the socialist proletariat in the western countries, having shaken off the yoke of the bourgeoisie, will in its turn help us achieve the social revolution" (Chapter 10).

<sup>61</sup> I do not know whether the readers have observed the

following characteristic fact: among the mass of rubbish which the new *Iskra* published in the form of leaflets there were a number of leaflets signed by Parvus. *Iskra* deliberately turned its back on these leaflets and refused to mention the name of our Party or even that of its publishing office in them.—N.L.

Martov, in his *History of Russian Social Democracy*, gives an idea of the quantity of literature issued at that period by the Mensheviks: *Iskra*—from ten to fifteen thousand copies; whilst periodical proclamations bearing on the war were reprinted in the provinces by the hundred thousand.

<sup>62</sup> Towards the close of 1904, Trotsky published a pamphlet in Geneva, *Our Political Objects*, in which he deliberately sided with "the minority" in the matter of organisation and strongly attacked the ideas which Lenin set forth in his pamphlet *One Step Forward—Two Steps Backward*.

<sup>63</sup> Namely, Trotsky's pamphlet *Before the Ninth of January*, which was written in Geneva towards the end of 1904, but was not published until after January 9th. In his preface to that pamphlet, Parvus expressed the view that as the working class was the driving force of the revolution, while the general strike and insurrection were its method, in the event of victory power should pass to the workers.

<sup>64</sup> The Social Revolutionary Party particularly met with great success, not only in the rural districts but also among the urban democracy. It rivalled the Social-Democratic Party even among the working class because of the popularity of its slogans, such as: the terror, the nationalisation of the land etc.

<sup>65</sup> Lenin had already criticised this "Svoboda" (Liberty) group in his *What is to be Done?* (See Vol. I.). Nadezhdin joined the Social-Democratic Party and, from February 15th, 1905, onwards, published a review in Geneva which was called: *In the Home Country, Echoes from Abroad*.

<sup>66</sup> For his work, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Lenin made a computation of the wage-earning population, which he put at some ten millions, of which one and a half millions were mill workers, miners and transport workers. According to the statistical data of

1898, there were 3,322,000 wage-earners in the mining industry, the manufacturing industry, transport, the building industry and commerce.

<sup>67</sup> Trotsky, in the postscript to his pamphlet *Before the Ninth of January*, wrote as follows: "The Russian Revolution has begun, it is reaching its climax: the revolt of the whole people. Upon this revolt depends the future of the revolution; it is the duty of every one of us to organise it. A priest Gapon could appear but once. It was only the power of extraordinary illusions that made it possible for him to accomplish the work he did. But even he could remain but for a short while at the head of the masses. The revolutionary proletariat will always cherish the memory of Father George Gapon. It will, however, be the memory of a lone and almost a legendary hero who opened the revolutionary floodgates. If, to-day, another man appeared, equalling Gapon in energy, revolutionary enthusiasm and in the power of his political illusions, he would be too late. What was great in George Gapon might now seem ridiculous. It is impossible for a second Gapon to arise, for what we need to-day are not fiery illusions, but a clear revolutionary conscience, a precise plan of action and a supple revolutionary organisation which can give the masses the necessary slogan, lead them to the battlefield, sound the general attack and direct the fight to final victory. None but Social-Democracy can create such an organisation. . . . At the head of the revolution stands the proletariat, and at the head of the proletariat stands Social-Democracy."

<sup>68</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VI., pp. 133-140.

<sup>69</sup> In his speech, at the Third Congress, on the question of Social-Democrats joining the provisional revolutionary government, Lenin said: "At first sight it may seem strange that such a question should arise at all. One would imagine that the prospects of Social-Democracy were excellent and that it was highly probable that we should participate in the provisional revolutionary government. As a matter of fact, it is nothing of the sort. It is quixotic to consider this question as being realisable in the near future. This question has been forced on us by the polemics between various *litterateurs* rather than by the real facts of the

situation. It should always be borne in mind that it was raised, for the first time, by Martynov before the 9th of January."

<sup>10</sup> Indeed, in No. 93 of *Iskra*, March 17th, 1905, we find on this subject a *Political Letter* by Trotsky, an article by Martov on *The Workers' Party and the "Usurpation of Power" as Our Immediate Object* and Martynov's *Revolutionary Prospects*.

<sup>11</sup> In the pamphlet on the *Two Dictatorships*, of which the essential passage was quoted in the preceding article.

<sup>12</sup> These expressions, such as "usurpation of power" and "vulgar Jaurèsism," were repeated by Martov.

<sup>13</sup> Lenin, in an article in *Vperiod*, entitled *From Populism to Marxism*, had criticised the programme of the Social Revolutionary Party as being a confused mixture of old Populist ideas and Marxian principles. The Social Revolutionaries reasoned thus: only the proletariat, the toiling peasants and the revolutionary intellectuals were interested in the downfall of Tsarism; while, on the contrary, the landed nobility, the big merchants and industrialists, as well as the rich peasants, still needed Tsarism; consequently the impending revolution would not be a bourgeois revolution.

<sup>14</sup> The programme which was adopted at the Third Congress consisted of a maximum programme embodying the ultimate aims of the party (the social revolution through the dictatorship of the proletariat), and a minimum programme which sets as its immediate purpose the overthrow of the autocracy, its place to be filled by a democratic republic.

<sup>15</sup> The Amsterdam Congress, the Sixth Congress of the Second International, had just been held, in August, 1904. After lengthy discussion it pronounced itself against revisionism and its tactics, including those of joining capitalist governments.

<sup>16</sup> The desperate battle fought under the walls of Mukden, the Manchurian capital, between the Russian army commanded by Kuropatkin and the Japanese army of Marshal Oyama had just ended in the occupation of the city by the Japanese (February 25th, 1905). It was the last big battle of the Russo-Japanese war, and the one which decided the issue of the war.

<sup>77</sup> "If," wrote Martov in *Iskra*, No. 93, "we join a government that will reorganise Russia, in the capacity of one of the leading parties, then we assume the responsibility for all the consequences of the historical limitation of the bourgeois revolution. We will have to fight not only against the presence of reactionary elements in the new administration, but also to have them replaced by certain progressive elements; we will sanction all sorts of 're-organised' instruments of the political predominance of the bourgeoisie, the army and officers, the police and jailers and . . . at a given moment we will stand in sharp conflict with the bulk of the proletariat, in regard to whom, notwithstanding our participation in the government, all the 'immanent' laws of the bourgeois regime, namely unemployment, inequality, coercion, are still valid. . . ."

<sup>78</sup> Büchner, whose capital work *Force and Matter* bears the date 1855, and Vogt and Molleschott, whose principal works appeared somewhere in the middle of the nineteenth century, were physicists and physiologists whose materialism had no bearing either on philosophy or on the social sciences. Feuerbach, on the contrary, was a philosopher and a disciple of Hegel whose philosophical and religious ideas greatly influenced Marx and Engels. The works of the first three of those named here were widely circulated in Russia in the years 1860-1870.

<sup>79</sup> Allusion is made to a plan which had been elaborated by Axelrod, and which Lenin criticised: see the first article in this volume (the municipal or zemstvo campaign).

<sup>80</sup> In his memoirs [*A Great Historical Test*], Martynov relates how, after the London Congress, in putting to himself the question as to whether Russia would go through the same experiment as France did in 1793, he studied the history of the Convention. "The result of this study," says Martynov, "was my pamphlet *Two Dictatorships*."

<sup>81</sup> Lenin means the Social Revolutionary Party. The Third Congress resolved that: (1) temporary fighting agreements with Social Revolutionary organisations with a view to carrying on the struggle against the autocracy may be useful in certain cases; (2) such agreements must not in any way restrict the independence of the Social Democratic Party nor prejudice the cohesion and the purity of its proletarian tactics and its principles.

<sup>52</sup> When speaking of a bloc with the bourgeois democracy against the autocracy, Lenin never omitted to stress the fact that the proletariat must never lose sight of the conflict of interests that exists between itself and the ruling classes.

<sup>53</sup> A slogan started by Trotsky and criticised by Martov on the ground that Social Democracy must on principle be in uncompromising opposition to every government and should not "repudiate the prejudice which forbids defiling the lips by combining the words: 'Long live' and 'Government.' "

<sup>54</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VI., pp. 365-372.

<sup>55</sup> The Mensheviks abroad, as well as a certain number of committees in Russia, refused to recognise the Third Congress as regular.

<sup>56</sup> In his speech at the Third Congress, Lenin recalled that, according to Engels, the principle of *Iskra*: "to act only from below and never from above—is an anarchist principle," and so is the idea that "the establishment of a revolutionary government is a new deceit and betrayal of the working class."

<sup>57</sup> In an article published in *The Proletarian*, No. 3, May 27th, 1905, Lenin analyses Engels' articles on "The Bakunists At Work." Engels relates how, during the Spanish revolution of 1875, the Bakuninists were driven by the force of events to constitute a sort of revolutionary government, although "at their congress of September 15th, 1872, only ten months before the revolution, they had declared that 'the organisation of any political power—the so-called provisional revolutionary government—would be nothing other than . . . another deceitful act no less dangerous for the proletariat than all the actually existing governments.'" (Resolution on the Nature of the Political Action of the Proletariat adopted by the St. Junien Congress; quoted from *L'Internationale*, Vol. III., p. 8, by J. Guillaume.)

<sup>58</sup> In Chapter V. of this pamphlet, Lenin shows that, by regarding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly as a possible form of the decisive victory of the revolution, without any reference whatever to the republic or a revolutionary government, the Mensheviks put themselves on the level of the Monarchists of the *Osvobozhdenye*, who also

demanded a Constituent Assembly, and then concludes: "Your tactical directions, as formulated in the name of your conference, coincide with those of the Constitutional Democratic Party, that is, the party of the monarchist bourgeoisie. You yourselves fail to observe this coincidence, you are not conscious of it, so that practically you drag at the tail of the *Osvobozhdenye*." (The constitutionalist members of the zemstvo at their Congress of July 9-11th, had decided to form a Constitutional Democratic Party.)

<sup>89</sup> In Chapter VIII. of this pamphlet, Lenin analyses an article in *Osvobozhdenye*, in which Struve, the once "legal Marxian," voices his idea of "founding Russian democracy not on the basis of the struggle, but of the co-operation of classes." He combats the idea of forming secret organisations and organising rebellion, and, while admitting the inevitability of insurrection, declares that the essential thing is to "drive into the masses the ideas of democratic reform."

<sup>90</sup> See Vol. I. of this series.

<sup>91</sup> Marx in his *Critical Remarks on Hegel's Philosophy of Right* wrote: "The weapon of criticism cannot replace the criticism of arms, material force must be conquered by material force; but theory, too, becomes a material force as soon as it is accepted by the masses." (*Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. I., p. 392.)

<sup>92</sup> Allusion is made here to the revolutionary events in Germany in 1848, and the policy of the "Frankfurt Parliament," which betrayed all the hopes the revolutionaries placed in it at the outset. The Mensheviks, in defence of their tactics, juggled with certain passages from Marx written at the time (1848-1850). Lenin, in one of the appendices to his pamphlet, on *Two Tactics*, recalls that Marx condemned "the constitutional illusions of the bourgeois democrats in the period of the revolution and open civil war." And, then again, he writes, in Chapter III.: "Marx in his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, poured pitiless scorn upon the Frankfurt Liberals, who spoke fine words, instituted all kinds of liberties, but, in point of fact, left power in the hands of the king and took no measures to organise an armed struggle against the military force which the king had at his command. While the Frankfurt Liberals were prattling, the king was biding his time and reinforcing his troops, so that finally the counter-revolution, supported by

real force, crushed the democrats with all their wonderful resolutions."

<sup>93</sup> D. Shipov, one of the leaders of the constitutionalist members of the zemstvo, chairman of the November Congress of 1904. He was one of the 27 members of this Congress who were left in the minority and who, while denouncing the bureaucracy and demanding elementary liberties, opposed the establishment of a popularly elected legislative assembly and opposed universal suffrage, even in municipal elections. In Chapter III., Lenin discusses the two possible issues of the revolution: either complete victory or "an abortive constitution," "an illusory constitution," à la Shipov—in that even "the Tsarist government will succeed, by convening a representative assembly, in striking a bargain with the Liberal bourgeoisie."

<sup>94</sup> At the very time that Lenin was writing this chapter, the decision was taken by the Russian Government to begin negotiations with Japan, with a view to ending the disastrous war. It is difficult to say whether it was this that Lenin had in mind. On the other hand, he attached great importance to the discredit which its impotence in the face of the revolution had brought upon Tsarism abroad. (In an article in *The Proletarian* of June 27th, 1905, dealing with the arrival of the cruiser "Potemkin" in Roumania, Lenin wrote: "The Russian Revolution signifies for Europe the beginning of the Russian people's war against Tsarism.")

<sup>95</sup> In this connection the letter addressed by Struve to Jaurès, recently published by the latter in *Humanité* and by Struve in No. 72 of *Osvobozhdenye*, is of great interest.  
—N.L.

<sup>96</sup> In his book on the *Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution*, published in 1917, Lenin quotes data showing that, in 1905, more than one-half of the peasantry belonged to the category of the poorest peasants (who possessed no horses at all, or had but one horse per family), about one-third belonged to the category of middle peasants (with two or three horses in their possession), and slightly over one-tenth were well-to-do peasants (with four horses and more).

<sup>97</sup> In all the provinces of Russia, the peasants' movement had been steadily growing since February, 1905, manifest-

ing itself by various acts of violence: burning of big manor houses, seizing the land, hay and corn, destroying the forests. All the categories of the peasant class, even the *kulaks* (well-to-do peasants), joined in this movement.

<sup>98</sup> While the Third Congress did not modify the agrarian programme of the Social-Democratic Party, which stipulated only the restitution to the peasants of those plots of land which had been taken away from them at the time of the abolition of serfdom, it nevertheless declared that the Party would support "all the revolutionary measures of the peasant class aimed at improving its lot, up to and including the confiscation of the lands of big landowners, the Crown, the churches and the monasteries."

<sup>99</sup> In Germany as seen above; and in France, in 1848 for example.

<sup>100</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VI., pp. 408-415.

<sup>101</sup> It had been announced that the elections would take place in accordance with the system adopted in 1884 for the zemstvos, that is to say, indirectly and on a property qualification, thus excluding workers, poor peasants or peasants living away from their commune, artisans, school teachers and rural physicians; as for the peasants, the village assembly elected delegates, these elected the provincial electors, and these latter only elected the deputies for the Duma.

<sup>102</sup> In fact, after the promulgation of the law governing the establishment and method of election of the Duma on August 6th, the Congress that was announced was not held, and the one that finally assembled from the 12th to 15th of September decided to participate in the elections.

<sup>103</sup> The Constitutional Democratic Party virtually existed since the spring of 1905 and the publication of the programme of the Union of the *Osvobozhdenye*. It was regarded as a combination of this Union and the Zemstvo-Constitutionalist fraction. In an article in *Proletarii* (No. 3, May 27th) Lenin explains that "the name *Constitutional Democrat* was intended to conceal the monarchist character of the party," of which neither of the two constituent groups had ever uttered a word about a republic.

<sup>104</sup> The Union of Unions (the term "Union of Unions" is not quite correct because there had been only

one federation of unions) included many of the intellectuals who were previously active in the zemstvos movement, and in the beginning, the Zemstvo Constitutionalists had adhered to it.

<sup>105</sup> The higher administration was recruited from among the big landed proprietors. In 1905 there were about 28,700 families to whom belonged 70,000,000 hectares of land (out of 230,000,000) and the principal offices of the State.

<sup>106</sup> *The Proletariat Fights, the Bourgeoisie Slips into Power*—was the exact title given by Lenin to his article in No. 10 of the *Proletarii* (20th July). He develops the idea indicated here thus: "The Liberal bourgeoisie goes to the people. That is true. It is forced to go to the people, because without them it is incapable of fighting the autocracy. But it is afraid of the revolutionary people, and goes to them not as the champion of their interests, not as a new and enthusiastic comrade in the fight, but as a huckster, as a broker who runs from one belligerent to another. To-day it goes to the Tsar and demands from him, in the name of the 'people,' a constitutional monarchy, basely disowning the people, the 'troubles,' the 'theories,' the revolution. To-morrow, from the height of its congress, it threatens the Tsar with a constitutional monarchy and passive resistance to the bayonets. You have deserved this contempt (of the reactionaries) because you do not fight by the side of the people; you only try to insinuate yourselves into power behind the backs of the revolutionary people."

<sup>107</sup> The Congress of the zemstvo held on 24th-25th May, 1905, after the Tsu-Shima disaster, had sent to the Tsar a delegation begging him, in language charged with the purest loyalism, to convene the representatives of the nation. The Congress held in July, however, launched an appeal to the people. In the article referred to in the preceding note, Lenin already quotes from and comments on the speeches (as reported in the *Times*) delivered at this second Congress by Petrunkevitch, one of those who took part in the delegation of 6th June, and the leader at that time of the Constitutional Democratic Party. Here are some fragments from the speeches: "Till 6th June we yet hoped that the Tsar would understand. . . . We must give up that hope.

. . . Our sole hope to-day is the people. . . . The incapacity and the impotence of the government have stirred up the revolution; that is a fact. . . . Our duty is to do everything to avoid bloodshed. . . . We must courageously go to the people and not to the Tsar." Lenin brings out the contradiction that there is between these words and the Constitution which was accepted by this party, and which "guarantees, in the first place, the monarchy and the preservation of the autocracy of the Tsar, and the army of bureaucrats, and, in the second place, the political domination of the landed proprietors and the big bourgeois through an Upper House.

<sup>108</sup> According to this project, the non-possessing classes were to be excluded from the right to vote.

<sup>109</sup> Particularly the Third Congress had accepted in principle agreements of this type with the Social Revolutionaries, without the approval of the Central Committee. Lenin extends this authorisation to cover the entire left-wing of bourgeois democracy, that is to say, organisations like the Union of Unions, but excluding the Liberals of the *Osvobozhdenye*.

<sup>110</sup> On 12th January, 1904, a *ukase* was issued promising "great internal reforms" in the near future. On 29th January the Shidlovsky commission was set up to improve the condition of the workers; on 18th February the Bulygin decree announced the right of the elected representatives of the people to participate in passing laws.

<sup>111</sup> In the article quoted, written after the *Potemkin* mutiny, Lenin declares that, in the minimum programme to be realised within the framework of the bourgeois revolution, there are "special demands arising out of the first demands." It is important to throw light on these fundamental demands in order "to show to the whole people, even the most ignorant masses, in concise formulæ and in frank and clear outlines, the aims of the provisional revolutionary government and its nation-wide objectives." These *Six Points* are formulated somewhat more explicitly in the present article.

<sup>112</sup> At this date the necessity for revolutionary action had created a powerful current in favour of unity; often, in Russia, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks would enter into permanent alliances and form "federal committees." The

first conference between the representatives of the Bolshevik C.C. and the Menshevik Organisation Committee took place on 12th July.

<sup>113</sup> See the first article in the present volume.

<sup>114</sup> (Prince Serge) Trubetskoy, professor of philosophy at the University of Moscow, and (Michel) Feodorov, representing commerce and industry in the municipal council of St. Petersburg—both of whom, along with Petrunkevitch, had participated in the delegation of 6th June to the Tsar—were less bold in their speeches than their colleague.

<sup>115</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VI., pp. 468-469.

<sup>116</sup> Martov had published in No. 40 of *Iskra* a detailed reply to Lenin's article.

<sup>117</sup> Parvus had written that, after having gained entrance to the election meetings by force, the workers should not put electoral questions but should put political questions of a nature calculated to revolutionise the masses, but he had "not uttered a word on the necessity of preaching insurrection in these election meetings."

He supported the plan put forward by Dan, while he criticised that of Lenin as making the tactics of the proletariat dependent on that of the left-wing of democracy and tending to substitute the action of a provisional government for the initiative of the masses (revolutionary self-government).

<sup>118</sup>-This answer of *Proletarii* was not that of all the Bolsheviks. On the contrary, the majority of the Central Committee, while proposing insurrection as the general objective, considered that for the period of the Duma elections there should be popular protests by diverse forces according to the degree of preparation in each region: political general strike, armed demonstrations, insurrection. A resolution of the Central Committee adopted in August speaks only of "preparing everywhere a general and simultaneous protest . . . in the form of a general and simultaneous strike . . . in the form of a political general strike and armed demonstrations, wherever possible." The rapidity with which events developed put a stop to these divergencies.

<sup>119</sup> Stakhovitch being a right zemstvo-ist of the Shipov  
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tendency, and Petrunkevitch a left zemstvo-ist, Parvus thought it possible to support the latter against the former.

<sup>120</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VII., Part I., pp. 39-40.

<sup>121</sup> At the International Socialist Congress of Brussels, held in 1891, two delegates from certain Anarchist organisations applied for permission to attend. The application was rejected. Two other Anarchists were admitted as trade union delegates. The Zurich Congress of 1893 admitted the right of representation only in the case of parties and organisations which "recognised the necessity of Labour organisations and political action." On this ground the London Congress of 1896 refused to recognise the mandates of Anarchists. The Congress laid down certain conditions of representation at future international congresses, which formally excluded Anarchists, even those representing the trade unions.

<sup>122</sup> The Mensheviks called it and regarded it as such. Lyadov, one of the principal agitators of the party, repeats in his *Memoirs of 1903-1907* these words of Lenin: "They would like to make the Soviet a talking-shop, a Labour Parliament."

<sup>123</sup> From the 19th of November onwards the Executive Committee consisted of 50 members, made up of the representatives of the working-class districts, the trade unions and the three socialist parties. There was no time for Lenin's proposal to be carried out. The various peasant delegations which came to the Soviet made it clear that the peasant question was becoming—as Lenin wrote on 12th November—a question of practical importance, and that the peasantry as a class was becoming an essential and active factor in the revolution.

<sup>124</sup> A bourgeois party, consisting of bourgeois intellectuals and high officials, formed about the middle of October, 1905. Its programme was constitutional monarchy and the earliest possible convocation of the Duma. On the other hand, the party also demanded a strong government and a campaign against the revolution in the towns and the villages. It carried on propaganda among the workers in order to win them away from Social-Democracy.

<sup>125</sup> Allusion is made here to the meeting between Tsar Nicholas II. and Kaiser Wilhelm II. in July, 1905, at Bjorko

in Finland and to the conversations between Count Witte (on his return in September from America, where he had signed the peace treaty with Japan) and M. Loubet and the French Ministers with the object of floating a loan destined to save Tsarism.

<sup>126</sup> After the Manifesto of 17th of October the counter-revolution began to organise with the help of the bureaucracy and the police. Under the direction of the Union of Russian Men, armed gangs, recruited from among the petty-bourgeoisie and the slum proletariat, began to sack the Jewish quarters, to kill militant workers and to excite the mob against the intellectuals. Very often the disorders started with the sacking of government vodka depots. The activities of these Black Hundreds, as they were called, continued during the whole period of reaction.

<sup>127</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VII., Part I., pp. 42-48.

<sup>128</sup> The unions participated actively in the political movements, that is to say, political strikes etc. For example, the Printers' Union decided to boycott those publishing and printing houses which did "not systematically disregard the Director of the Press" (the Censor) as a measure for the consolidation of the freedom of the press. In addition to the various trade unions, there were other bodies, organised according to locality or in particular factories, called "workshop and factory councils," "strike fund clubs," etc, which played a similar rôle and answered to the description given here by Lenin.

<sup>129</sup> On the eve of the revolution there were in Russia about three million industrial workers; the concentration of industry appears from the following figures: enterprises making more than 50,000 roubles profit per year formed 2 per cent. of the total number of enterprises; 450 enterprises, each employing 1,000 workers and upwards employed together 1,100,000 workers. On the contrary, Germany in 1848 was on the whole—as Engels recognised in his *Revolution and Counter-revolution*—a country of artisans and small industry.

<sup>130</sup> About 75 per cent. of the population was illiterate; only 1 per cent. was educated above the primary school level, while 0.01 per cent. had any higher education.

<sup>131</sup> A meeting of the St. Petersburg clergy demand the

reform of the seminaries and the abolition of the privileges of the monks (*Novaya Zhizn*, No. 1); the workers demand, in addition to the eight-hour working day and an increase in wages, "polite treatment and the improvement of the internal regime, the abolition of fines and a place for meetings inside the factory" (*Novaya Zhizn*, No. 9); the Union of Telephone Workers seek "a real improvement of the living conditions of the employees" (No. 10); the restaurant waiters desire that "the employers should have no right to interfere in their private lives or in their actions outside restaurant work" and wish that there should be "more politeness on the part of the employers, the administrative personnel and the clients" (No. 10); the soldiers ask for more human treatment, and also demand that their letters should not be opened, and that they should be allowed the use of the libraries (No. 12); similar demands were made by the municipal police, who organised themselves in a "Union of Police Employees" (No. 11).

<sup>132</sup> That is to say, the Social Revolutionaries. In an article published in the *Novaya Zhizn* of 12th November (No. 11) Lenin adopts their motto "Land and Liberty," and recognises that the peasants want *all* the land and an elected government, but he adds: "Even when the land belongs to the whole of the nation, he alone will be economically independent who possesses capital, instruments, cattle, machinery, grain stocks and, generally speaking, money. The idea of the socialisation of land without the socialisation of capital . . . is erroneous." Further on he defines the peasant as a revolutionary democrat.

<sup>133</sup> Allusion is made here to the speeches delivered at the Zemstvo Congress—the last of a series of congresses—held in Moscow from 6th to 13th November, 1905. Rodichiev was a big landholder of the province of Tver and one of the founders of the Cadet Party. The idea to which Lenin refers is also expressed in the speech of Petrunkevitch, quoted in the *Novaya Zhizn* (No. 8) as follows: "We have a terrible picture before us; all around are pogroms and the countryside has risen in revolt. The Government is on the verge of bankruptcy. . . . At a moment like this we are offered a division into parties. This is not the time for it. . . . When the country is faced with ruin all parties should unite, should give each other a hand. I am not

a socialist, but, at this hour of danger, I am ready to stretch out my hand to the socialists, provided they also agree to give up their class interest etc."

<sup>134</sup> *Nasha Zhizn* had been appearing since November, 1904, as a daily, propagating the ideas of the *Osvobozhdenye*; on its staff were Prokopovitch and Kuskova. A Radical Democratic Party was forming itself around this organ, with a programme more to the left than that of the Cadets (it did not, however, exercise any influence and disappeared about March-April, 1906). Owing to the approaching elections, a number of parties of the most varied tendencies arose at this time.

<sup>135</sup> Here Lenin is refuting the opinion of a number of Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik members of the St. Petersburg Soviet had threatened to retire from the Soviet if the latter did not adopt the Social-Democratic programme.

<sup>136</sup> These conditions—temporary character, independence of the Party, control by the Central Committee—are the same as those put forward by the Third Congress in connection with a proposed alliance with the Social Revolutionaries.

<sup>137</sup> The Social-Democratic Party had not yet been formally legalised; while it enjoyed certain liberties with regard to printed propaganda and assembly, its situation nevertheless was very precarious. Lenin himself was then living in hiding and all the secret apparatus continued to exist.

<sup>138</sup> One of the grave questions which then agitated the Party was that of the relations between the militant rank and file and the committees and between the workers and the intellectuals. Lenin had published in *Novaya Zhizn* several articles on *Party Re-organisation*, in which he recognised the necessity of a new orientation; he wrote that, given a certain—even unstable—political liberty, the principle of election had to be re-asserted.

<sup>139</sup> The insurrection is dealt with in an article *The Lessons of the Moscow Insurrection* on page 195.

<sup>140</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VII., Part I., pp. 72-81.

<sup>141</sup> Shipov had become one of the leaders of the League of 17th October, which combined the organisations of the big landed proprietors and of the high officials who strictly

adhered to the *ukase* of 17th October. (See reference note 151.)

<sup>142</sup> In his *History of Russian Social Democracy* Martov admitted that the complicated tactics of the Mensheviks (partial boycott) were not understood, and that the "vast majority of the party organisations chose the Bolshevik plan as being more consistent and simple."

<sup>143</sup> Lenin always distinguishes three periods: the period when insurrection is a theoretical objective, the period when practical preparation is made for insurrection, and the period when the Party makes a direct call to insurrection.

<sup>144</sup> Lenin justified boycotting tactics precisely on the ground that the Duma was not a Parliament.

<sup>145</sup> In February, 1847, Frederick William IV, King of Prussia, was hard pressed for money. The public opinion of the whole country, with the exception of the high nobility and the high bureaucracy, decided to convoke the eight Landtags or Assemblies of the eight Prussian provinces as a single "United Landtag." This Assembly was a purely consultative body, deprived as it was of the power of initiative; its sole purpose was to give the king the guarantee for a loan which would have been refused without it. The Assembly, however, refused the guarantee. Engels shows in his *Revolution and Counter-revolution* (this work was still being attributed to Marx at the time when Lenin wrote) that at this moment "the Liberal Union, led by the bourgeoisie, comprising a big part of the lesser nobility and influenced by the discontent which had accumulated in the various sections of the lower classes . . . insisted upon a modern, representative and anti-feudal constitution with all its corollaries: freedom of the press, trial by jury, etc. It sought by all possible means to secure the support of the town workers and the peasants . . . and towards the end of the year 1847 there was hardly a notable political personage who had not declared himself a socialist in order to win the sympathies of the proletariat." Thus this period marked the apogee of the revolutionary movement in which the bourgeoisie resolutely held up its head. But it was also the end; because when, on 18th March, 1848, the proletariat of Berlin rose in arms, a few petty concessions made by the king proved enough for the bourgeoisie to declare itself satisfied: "the alliance between

the bourgeoisie and the partisans of the overthrown regime was concluded on the very barricades of Berlin." But the alliance itself split the bourgeoisie into two camps; the petty bourgeoisie formed the Popular or Democratic Party demanding universal suffrage, a single Chamber and "the full recognition of the revolution of 18th March as the basis of the new system of government." A parody of a Constituent Assembly was convoked, but on 9th November the king declared it dissolved, replacing it by a truncated Assembly in which the powers of the popular representatives were reduced to a minimum. Later on the conflict between the National Assembly and the States which refused to accept the Federal Constitution elaborated by it gave rise to a series of insurrections throughout the whole of Germany (May, 1849), to the disgust of the democratic elements. In July the insurrection was completely crushed and the revolution was "exhausted."

<sup>146</sup> The Communist League was formed in the summer of 1847 in London as a secret propagandist society having for its object "the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the rule of the proletariat, the overthrow of the bourgeois society founded on the antagonism of classes and the establishment of a new society without classes and without private property." Marx was a member of the Central Committee of the League and exercised a preponderating influence on it.

<sup>147</sup> During the reactionary period the exile of its members and disagreements on the question of the tactics to be followed disrupted the Communist League. In March, 1850, the Central Committee attempted its reconstitution, and issued a circular to this end. The circular was written by Marx and Engels, and brought into Germany by a special emissary. As has been seen in the preceding articles, this circular gave rise to many discussions between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks.

<sup>148</sup> An agent sent to Germany by an organisation hostile to the League avowed not having been able to do anything "because all the forces that could be utilised were already in the hands of the League" (the phrase was quoted in the second *Circular* of the Central Committee, dated June, 1850).

<sup>149</sup> "As in France in 1793, so in Germany to-day: strict

centralisation is the duty of a really revolutionary party." This passage, like those preceding, is found in the March Circular. It was also published (together with the second) in an appendix to the 1885 edition of Marx's *Revelations Concerning the Cologne Communist Trial*.

<sup>150</sup> Lenin wrote this on the basis of Engels's preface to *Revelations Concerning the Cologne Communist Trial*. The quotation from Marx is also taken from that book. The original was contained in an article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of October, 1850. Marx there says: "In the period of a general upward trend in which the productive forces of bourgeois society are developed as extensively as is possible within the framework of the bourgeois regime, a real revolution is unthinkable."

<sup>151</sup> After the November Zemstvo Congress the right minority, frightened by the agrarian revolution, grouped itself in the League of 17th October; the programme of the League consisted of a constitutional regime and the freedom of the press and association, but, as distinguished from the Cadets, said nothing of the Constituent Assembly, and did not accept the expropriation of the big landlords.

<sup>152</sup> In the beginning of 1906 the agrarian movement had diminished in extent, but during the spring and summer (May-August), it again spread and embraced 250 districts, nearly the maximum reached in September-December, 1905 (261). It, however, remained isolated, in spite of some local attempts to link up with the towns.

<sup>153</sup> From 1883 up to 1st January, 1906—a course of 23 years—the peasantry had bought up, through the Peasant Bank, nearly 7,500,000 hectares of land. In 1906 alone the peasantry thus acquired from the nobility 1,200,000 hectares. Faced with the agrarian movement, the landlords hastened to get rid of their property. These purchases were mainly collectively made by village communes, though individual purchasers, that is to say prosperous peasants, showed a tendency to increase. The Government began to encourage this movement; commissions were set up by a ukase of 4th March to aid the peasants in the purchase of lands belonging to private proprietors and the State. By the end of 1907 one-tenth of the big estates was sold.

<sup>154</sup> *The Agrarian Question in Russia* originally appeared

in 1905-6 in the form of an article in the *Neue Zeit*. As in the case of a very large number of articles and pamphlets of Kautsky, this work was translated into Russian in the same year, 1906. In March, 1906, Lenin took a special interest in the agrarian question; he had just written his memorandum on the *Revision of the Agrarian Programme of the Workers' Party*, and he found in Kautsky an ally who, unlike most of the Social-Democrats, was favourable to the partition of the big estates.

<sup>155</sup> In December, 1905, in No. 4 of his *Dnevnik* (*Diary*), Plekhanov, writing from abroad, and still freshly impressed by the happenings in Moscow, says: "What is done cannot of course be undone. But important lessons can be learned from the events. For example, it is clear that we ought to take advantage of the support of the non-proletarian Opposition parties and not estrange them by inappropriate tirades."

<sup>156</sup> An expression of Plekhanov in the same *Dnevnik*. He says: "The general strike has led . . . to insurrection in Moscow, Sormovo, Bakhmut and elsewhere. In these insurrections our proletariat has shown itself strong, bold and brave. All this, however, has not sufficed to bring about victory. This was easy to foresee; and consequently they should not have taken up arms."

<sup>157</sup> The "punitive expeditions" often were equipped with artillery; in the Caucasus and the Baltic provinces they would destroy whole villages and impose heavy fines on the population. The destruction caused in the Lettish provinces alone from the middle of December, 1905, to 1st June, 1906, was estimated at 2,000,000 roubles, without counting the forced payments and other plunder, apart also from the 1,170 peasants killed.

<sup>158</sup> The acute character of the peasant movement at the end of 1905 is explained partly by the famine which smote nearly two-thirds of the provinces of European Russia. The harvest was 20 per cent. less than that of 1904. That of 1906 was still worse—12 per cent. less than in 1905, and almost 30 per cent. less than in 1904; hence the revival of the movement in May-August, 1906.

<sup>159</sup> The crisis did arise immediately after the defeat of the insurrection. The deficit for 1905 amounted to 215,000,000 roubles, the estimated deficit for 1906 reached

631,000,000. The amount of paper-money in circulation had increased from 630,000,000 in the beginning of 1904 to 1,200,000,000; the withdrawals from the savings banks (at the behest of the St. Petersburg Soviet) amounted to 150,000,000; the direct taxes had practically ceased to come in. The indirect taxes, however, were increased, and these, particularly the receipts from the vodka monopoly, covered a part of the deficit. At the very moment when Lenin was writing, negotiations for a foreign loan were on the eve of being concluded. Thus the financial factor was not destined to serve the revolution.

<sup>160</sup> The new commercial convention between Russia and Germany signed on 15th July, 1904, and coming into force on 18th June, 1906, appreciably increased the custom dues on Russian corn, timber and cattle entering Germany. The commercial treaties with Bulgaria and France were renewed in 1905, and those with Austria and Roumania in 1906, often with clauses disadvantageous to Russia, who was already weakened by war and revolution. Kautsky has made a special study of the effect of commercial treaties on the economy of States.

<sup>161</sup> The "fighting detachments" were organised in Moscow after the October strikes, at first spontaneously, but later under the direction of the parties. The Social Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks had each their own "detachment." But these "detachments" either lacked arms or had only Browning revolvers. Hence, according to those who took part in the Moscow insurrection, they were more fitted for combatting the Black Hundreds and preventing pogroms than for participating in a general engagement with troops. Later it was proved that there was no contact between the "General Staff" of the insurrection and the detachments, and that the troops were far better armed than the insurgents—all this gave grounds for throwing ridicule upon fighting detachments and the "Brownings" as instruments totally unfit for the task they were called on to accomplish.

<sup>162</sup> General Kuropatkin was the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies in the Russo-Japanese War. The many defeats on the Russian side were attributed to his faulty strategy.

<sup>163</sup> In his preface written in 1895, Engels said that since

the institution of universal suffrage and the parliamentary system, the bourgeoisie is more afraid of the electoral successes of the proletariat than its rebellions. He said: "The conditions of fighting have radically changed. The old-fashioned rebellion, with street fights and barricades, which up to 1848 led to final decisions everywhere, is obviously out of date.

<sup>164</sup> The difference between the old and the new methods of barricade fighting is explained as follows by Lyadov in his *Memoirs of Party Life from 1903 to 1907*: "In other days (in Paris and Berlin in 1848) behind the barricades stood masses of workers who gave battle to masses of soldiers. In view of modern rifles, machine-guns and quick-firing long-range guns, it is naturally impossible for revolutionaries, if they are themselves not equipped with similar arms, to withstand the attack of regular troops. It is quite different with guerilla warfare. Its essential objective is never to give the enemy an occasion to fire upon large masses. Small detachments would constantly attack and harass the regular troops, but systematically avoid an open fight. There were very few troops in Moscow, and it was very easy to tire them out within the shortest time possible by forcing them to run about from one place to another. In fact, the garrison was restive by the third day, as is revealed in the correspondence of Dubassov with Petersburg. It was the result of guerilla warfare. Nowhere were the barricades defended. The soldiers took them according to all the rules of the game—first, artillery bombardment, and then a charge by infantry or cavalry. But there would be nobody behind the barricades. When they got there our squads, after firing a few volleys retired to the second line of barricades before the soldiers got to the first. The soldiers would then destroy the first barricade and advance further. But closely on their heels would appear masses of workers who, under the direction of our men, set to work to reconstruct the barricades. This went on for days."

The strike began on the 7th, but the fight really lasted only from 9th to 17th December, nine days. Trotsky in his book 1905 gives the following figures: "From 700 to 800 men were in the Party detachments (500 Social-Democrats, 250 to 300 Social Revolutionaries); 500 railway-

men, equipped with firearms, operated at the stations and along the lines; about 400 rifles, recruited from among the printers and clerks, formed the auxiliary detachments." The squad of the Presnya quarter, which was the best, consisted of 200 men with 80 rifles of different models. The Governor Dubassov, on the first day had at his command a garrison strength of 15,000 men, of which 5,000 were dependable, consisting of cavalry and artillery; later on he received more cavalry and artillery from Tver, and, lastly, on 15th December two guard regiments as reinforcements from Petersburg.

<sup>165</sup> The Unity Congress, whose convocation had been decided upon in December by the two conferences of the Bolsheviks (at Tammerfors) and the Mensheviks. It was to have been held in April at Stockholm.

<sup>166</sup> At the three preceding congresses the delegates were exclusively elected by the narrow circle of professional revolutionaries forming the committees. This time, in order to invest the Unity Congress with greater authority, and on account of the urgent demands of the rank-and-file members, it was decided that the delegates should be elected according to the principle of "democratic centralisation," that is to say, "with the participation of all the organised members of the party."

<sup>167</sup> The elections were to have been preceded by a discussion at general meetings of each organisation, of the opposed "platforms." In February a *Tactical Platform* written by a "group of ex-editors and ex-contributors of the *Proletarii* (that is to say, the Bolsheviks and chiefly Lenin) was distributed.

<sup>168</sup> In this paragraph Lenin criticises the inconsistency of the Menshevik position—the Mensheviks avoid giving any clear opinion on the general situation, the insurrection, the Duma, the actions of the combatants in the guerilla warfare. Thus, on the one hand, they want "to support the acts of the bourgeois democratic Opposition," they emphasise "the obligation of the Party to oppose all attempts to lead the proletariat to an armed assault," and they "consider it desirable . . . to constitute [in the Duma] a Social-Democratic fraction," and, on the other hand, they affirm that "a new development of the revolution is inevitable," and that "the revolutionary struggle . . . has already

brought home, and will again bring home, to the people the necessity of the insurrection." (Draft resolutions of the Mensheviks on the agenda of the Congress.)

<sup>110</sup> A German professor and economist of the school of "University Chair Socialists" (*Kathedersozialisten*), who maintained that the improvement of the condition of the working class depended on the free action of its organisations and the technical progress of the whole of society.

<sup>111</sup> While pretending to "have renounced the idea of arriving at its objectives by the way of an entente with the authorities," the Cadet Party had, during the months of October and November, negotiated with Prime Minister Witte. After the December insurrection it drifted more and more towards the right, all the time asserting that it had not left the revolutionary position. A resolution of the Cadet Party (at its second Congress, January 11th-15th, 1906) declares that "the party devotes all its efforts to the organisation . . . of public conscience by all means except insurrection."

<sup>112</sup> This paragraph constitutes the substance of the propositions contained in the draft resolutions of the Bolsheviks.

<sup>113</sup> No. 2 *Izvestia of the Party* (or *Party News*) contained the tactical platforms mentioned.

<sup>114</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VII., Part II., pp. 28-34.

<sup>115</sup> The electoral law of 11th December, which somewhat extended the franchise, had reopened the discussion on whether or not to take part in the elections. In January there appeared the pamphlet entitled *Social Democracy and the Duma*, in which the point of view of boycott was defended by Lenin (the article quoted) and that of participation, at least in the first two stages, by Dan (*The Duma and the Proletariat*).

<sup>116</sup> The Mensheviks always invoked the conduct of the German Social-Democrats in utilising the Bismarck Parliament.

<sup>117</sup> The resolution of the Mensheviks drawn up for the Unity Congress, while on the one hand affirming that the Duma was a product of a "counterfeit constitutionalism," on the other had recognised it as "the first representative assembly" which would be considered as "a new power,

called to life by the Tsar, recognised by law, issuing from the bosom of the nation and speaking in its name and oppressed by tyrannical bureaucracy."

<sup>177</sup> The Bulygin Duma (created by the law of 6th August) did not meet, on account of the general strike of October; its place was taken by the Witte Duma, somewhat more Liberal (electoral law of 11th December).

<sup>178</sup> At the elections for the first Duma, the Cadets had a brilliant victory—179 seats out of 478, including all the seats for Petersburg and Moscow. They formed the dominant party in the Duma and by far the most numerous. By a simple alliance with the left (with the 94 Trudoviki) or with the right (with the national and progressive groups), they could easily command a majority. The Social-Democrats had only 17 seats.

<sup>179</sup> The *Natchalo*, a Menshevik organ, legally appeared in St. Petersburg at the same time as the Bolshevik *Novaya Zhizn*. Chiefly edited by Trotsky and Parvus, it had a very revolutionary tone, and was suppressed by the police on 2nd December.

<sup>180</sup> The foreign bankers at first refused to grant any loan which would not be guaranteed by the Duma. (They did not maintain this position, however, and later granted the Tsarist Government a loan of 843,000,000 roubles. The loan was floated in the early part of April, 1906, while the Duma opened only on the 27th of the month.)

<sup>181</sup> It was said in this resolution that the conflicts between the Government and the Duma would exercise a demoralising and revolutionising influence, "particularly on the army, which will be shaken in its devotion to the throne, seeing for the first time on the soil of Russia a new power, issuing from the bosom of the nation, speaking in its name and oppressed by Tsarist tyranny." Among others, Lenin had protested in the Congress against the term "power" as denoting "the immeasurable optimism of our Mensheviks."

<sup>182</sup> In his first letter *On Tactics and the Lack of Tactics* (May, 1906) Plekhanov wrote: "Our Government has already committed many unpardonable sins. These sins have brought it to the edge of the abyss, but have not made it fall into the abyss. When the Government dissolves the Duma it will fall into the abyss." In an article in *Vperiod*

(No. 1, 26th May), Lenin replied: "The Government will not fall only because it dissolves the Duma. It will fall because of other circumstances also, because the Duma is not the principal factor. . . . It will not fall by itself, it will be pushed."

<sup>113</sup> In his *Diary of a Social-Democrat* (No. 5) Plekhanov recognised that his idea of participation in the election remained "undeveloped for the simple reason that I myself considered it unacceptable for our party."

<sup>114</sup> In a leaflet addressed *To the Party* in the beginning of 1906, the united Central Committee wrote: "The representatives of the two fractions are in agreement as to the substance . . . the participation of the Party in the last stage of the elections, that is to say, the election of deputies to the Duma, is inadmissible in the present circumstances. Opinion is divided only on the question of participation in the earlier stages, that is to say, the election of delegates and electors."

<sup>115</sup> In Georgia the Mensheviks had taken part in the election campaign, put forward candidates and gained one seat in the province of Tiflis and three in the province of Kutais.

<sup>116</sup> Later on, in *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, written in 1920, Lenin changed his opinion (Chapter IV., p. 21): "A small error easily corrected was the boycott of the Duma by the Bolsheviks in 1906." In fact, events had shown that at that time "a rapid rising of the revolutionary wave, resulting in an armed insurrection, could not be expected."

<sup>117</sup> Founded a little while previously, *Tovarisch* was a daily newspaper which, while calling itself "independent," continually manœuvred between the Mensheviks and the left Liberals of the type of Prokopovitch. At the elections for the second Duma it played an important part by demanding an electoral alliance between the Mensheviks and the Cadets. V. Vodovozov, a well-known publicist, was a former contributor to *Nasha Zhizn* (*Our Life*), which contained articles by left Liberals as well as by would-be Mensheviks, and which had carried on a campaign against the boycott. Lenin calls it elsewhere "a good gossip" which "would like to be more left than the Cadets."

<sup>168</sup> The Labour Group, formed a little before the opening of the first Duma, chiefly consisted of deputies elected by the peasants. Very often it united with the Social-Democratic fraction, especially in the last days of the Duma. Thus 33 of its members signed a proposal for the abolition of private property in land. The group contained Social Revolutionaries and Populists, but chiefly consisted of unattached deputies.

<sup>169</sup> The resolution on the attitude of the party towards the Duma ends thus: "Wherever the elections are not yet finished and wherever the Social-Democratic Workers' Party can put up candidates it should, without entering into alliance with the other parties, try to secure the return of its candidates to the Duma."

<sup>170</sup> In fact, in the second Duma the Cadets did not have more than 18 per cent. of the seats as against 35 per cent. in the first Duma. The "left bloc" (Social-Democrats, Social Revolutionaries, Populists and members of the Labour Group) doubled its forces. This passage expresses exactly the tactics of the Bolsheviks at the time of the elections for the second Duma. (See *Social-Democracy and Election Agreements* in this volume.)

<sup>171</sup> The proclamation of 9th July, 1906, dissolving the Duma, did indeed convoke a second assembly, but did not fix the date for the new elections.

<sup>172</sup> To the left of the Cadets there were several groups, like the "Nameless" Group (Prokopovitch, Kuskova), the Freethinkers, Radicals etc.; to the right stood the Party of Democratic Reforms.

<sup>173</sup> "Elections as soon as possible"—such was the slogan not only of the Cadets but even of Octobrists like Shipov and Prince Lvov.

<sup>174</sup> According to the Duma regulations of 20th February, 1906, the same *ukase* that dissolves the Duma should indicate the date of the new elections as well as that of the convocation of the new assembly.

<sup>175</sup> The big daily organ of the Cadet Party. First published February, 1906. Prohibited in July, it reappeared on 8th August, 1906.

<sup>176</sup> The Cadet Party demanded a ministry responsible to the Duma, and hoped, on the eve of the dissolution, to get its representatives in the ministry.

<sup>197</sup> On 12th July the Social-Democratic Central Committee (under the pressure of the Petersburg Committee), the Labour Group in the Duma, the Peasant League of Russia, the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party and the railwaymen's and school teachers' unions signed two appeals *To the Army and the Navy* and *To all the Peasants of Russia*. These appeals declared: "To-day, without the Duma, the Government is illegal, its orders are valueless. Don't obey it." The soldiers were asked not to fire on the people. The peasants were asked to replace all authorities by their own elected representatives and "to take all the land, but without any disorder and provisionally leaving it at the disposal of their elected committees."

<sup>198</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. VII., Part II., pp. 47 to 53.

<sup>199</sup> While only 1,200 to 1,400 men directly took part in armed action, nearly 150,000 workers were on strike in Moscow on 8th December.

<sup>200</sup> The Moscow Soviet had held its first sitting only on 22nd December, 1905. When the question of the general strike was raised the railwaymen and the workers in a number of factories declared that they would participate only on the condition that the strike was transformed into an insurrection. The manifesto issued on 6th December, signed by the Soviet, the Social-Democratic Committees and the Social Revolutionary Committees, called upon the soldiers to refuse to obey and "to join arms in hand, with the insurgent people in order at last to overthrow the criminal Government of the Tsar and to convocate the Constituent Assembly." Lastly, an announcement published by the *Izvestia of the Moscow Soviet* (No. 1, December 7th) ran: "The Moscow Soviet, the Committee of the Social-Democratic Party and the Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party have decided to declare in Moscow, as from midday of Wednesday, 7th December, a political general strike and energetically to strive to convert it into armed insurrection."

<sup>201</sup> The fighting squads had existed since October. As various parties, organisations and districts had their squads, a "Coalition Council" was formed to direct them. But on the 9th and also on the 19th of December, when the streets

were already covered with barricades, the Council held meetings to discuss whether the order to begin action was to be given to the squads, and each time it decided to postpone the question till the next day. The word "insurrection" had not been uttered once right throughout these meetings until, towards the end, a Social Revolutionary cried out: "Who knows? Perhaps the moment is near for the people to rise in insurrection." The Menshevik author whom Lenin quotes concludes: "Thus the Coalition Council not only failed to lead, but played no part at all in the development of the street fighting, which proceeded independently of it."

<sup>202</sup> On the first two days, all attention was directed to agitation and to bringing about a stoppage of work. In the evening of the 8th a huge mass meeting was held in the Aquarium in the centre of Moscow for the purpose of explaining to the population the aims of the movement. The meeting-place was surrounded by troops and the audience was searched and subjected to brutalities. The incident provoked lively indignation.

<sup>203</sup> On the evening of the 9th the streets were full of people as a result of the incident of the previous day. On the Strastnaya Square (not far from the Aquarium) the dragoons attacked the crowd and, in the darkness (the electric power stations having stopped), fired several rounds. Instead of dispersing, the crowd spontaneously set to work to put up barricades which the newly arrived troops cleared, one after another. Firing went on in the centre of the town up to two o'clock in the morning.

<sup>204</sup> In another quarter, about the same time, the Fiedler school, where squads and railwaymen had met together, was surrounded by the troops, who used artillery (causing resounding reverberations throughout Moscow). The besieged responded by throwing bombs. Finally, they gave themselves up (to the number of 140); many of these were killed and wounded.

<sup>205</sup> On the 10th, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, four guns, posted on the Strastnaya Square, bombarded Tverskaya, the central street, and the boulevard. Thus the attack developed more against the whole population than against the revolutionaries, hence there followed more barricades.

<sup>206</sup> From the 10th Dubassov, the Governor of Moscow, began to make frantic appeals for reinforcements. "The situation is becoming very serious, the ring of barricades is closing upon the town," he writes on the 11th to Witte and to the War and the Home Ministries. "The garrison is manifestly insufficient. Send at least one infantry brigade from Petersburg."

<sup>207</sup> On the 15th the Semenovsky and Ladoga regiments arrived in Moscow by the Nicholas line, on which no strike had taken place, and which was therefore still running. In addition to the 10 companies guarding the barracks, Dubassov up till then had at his command 27 other companies, that is to say 1,350 bayonets. The arrival of the 1,200 men comprising these two regiments thus doubled his effective strength, and permitted him to take the offensive. On the 17th Moscow was cleared of barricades. The Presnya district, which had fought almost without contact with the other districts, and which contained the largest number of armed insurgents, carried on longer than the others, till the 19th.

<sup>208</sup> The Social-Democratic committee of Moscow had confided the direction of the insurrection to an "executive commission" functioning in liaison with the executive committee of the Soviet. But quite early the districts found themselves practically isolated from the centre and from each other. Moreover, as a member of this executive commission relates, "even in the early days events followed each other with such rapidity that the decisions of the commission frequently arrived too late. Thus, on 9th December, on coming from a meeting at which the question as to whether barricades should be put up was discussed, we found the whole of the Sadovaya-Triumphalnaya covered with long rows of barricades."

<sup>209</sup> Thus the railwaymen proposed to occupy the Brest station, the printers asked for permission to barricade themselves in a printing press in order to divert the attention of the troops and thus make possible big operations and so on. No decision was taken. All eye-witnesses maintain that the leadership completely broke down.

<sup>210</sup> This expression was employed by Plekhanov in his *Diary of a Social-Democrat*, No. 4.

<sup>211</sup> In fact, the authors of the volume *Moscow in December, 1905*, wrote: "In the present period, characterised as it is by the formidable development of militarism, an absolute condition of a people's victory is that an important part of the troops should pass over actively to the side of the insurgent people or that the majority of the troops should categorically refuse to use their arms against the people." Now, "such conduct on the part of the army is possible," the authors conclude, "only at the end of the revolution, and of a revolution having a national character."

<sup>212</sup> There were sympathisers in most of the regiments, even in the Semenovsky regiment, which crushed the insurrection. The Social-Democratic Party, for some time past, had been distributing leaflets among them about the war with Japan, the brutalities against the strikers etc. It also tried to organise study circles among the soldiers, but all this was done in a casual and unsystematic manner.

<sup>213</sup> The event is related in greater detail by an eyewitness. In front of the Zoological Gardens were assembled in a mass the workers of the Prokhorov factory. There was a shout—"The Cossacks!" In fact, they were moving up, swinging horse-whips high in the air. The officer gave the command "Charge!" At this moment, two women detached themselves from the crowd, carrying a red flag with the inscription—"Soldiers, don't fire on us!" The Cossacks halted. The officer hurled—"Charge!" But nobody obeyed his order. Then suddenly, the Cossacks turned and rode away, accompanied by shouts of "Long live the Cossacks! Hurrah!" Mad with impotent anger, the officer followed them.

<sup>214</sup> General Malakhov was the commander of the Moscow Army Corps.

<sup>215</sup> The Krutitsky barracks were in the working class quarter of Simonovo. For a long time, the workers were in contact with the soldiers who declared that they themselves could not act but that they could join the movement, if people would come and ask them to do so. It was therefore arranged to hold a big meeting and go *en masse* to the barracks. But it became known that the soldiers were shut up and kept under guard by troops brought from another district. In the Khamovniki quarter, on 10th

December, following on a huge demonstration, the workers arrived in front of the barracks of the Nesvizhky regiment and were preparing to send up delegates to the soldiers when the dragoons charged and dispersed them.

<sup>216</sup> *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*. The rules of insurrection are given in full in Lenin's pamphlet *Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?* now included in the volume *Preparing for Revolt*.

<sup>217</sup> *Inter Alia* in the preface of the *Class Struggle* (See also above, the article *The Russian Revolution and the Tasks of the Proletariat*.)

<sup>218</sup> In his pamphlet published in July, 1906, entitled *The Dissolution of the Duma and the Objectives of the Proletariat*, Lenin counselled the formation, by the side of the Soviets, of "military organisations" based on "free and small groups of ten, five or even perhaps three."

<sup>219</sup> The elements of these new tactics could already be found in the *Advice to Insurgent Workers* drawn up by the fighting organisation of the Moscow Social-Democratic Committee and published in the *Izvestia of the Moscow Soviet* of 11th December: "Essential rule: Don't work in crowds. Act in small detachments of three or four, no more. Form as many of these detachments as possible and let everyone learn to attack swiftly and disappear as quickly as possible."

<sup>220</sup> The arms consisted mostly of revolvers, whereas rifles were required; there was a lack of uniformity. The bombs manufactured in large quantities in the workshops of the Central Committee remained undistributed.

<sup>221</sup> After the insurrection was crushed a wave of terrorist acts (murders of policemen, expropriations, and activities of the irregulars) broke out in answer to the repression of the Government. The Mensheviks chose to see anarchism in all this, and at the Stockholm Congress, the war of the irregulars—guerilla warfare—was condemned. For Lenin's opinion, see the article that follows.

<sup>222</sup> The insurgents of Presnya had suppressed all crime in their district. The Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet had announced that as from 7th December it would organise "the protection of private property against thieves and robbers for the duration of the strike." Even drunkenness disappeared. At the end of November and in Decem-

ber, the Baltic provinces were the scene of a powerful and strongly organised insurrection of peasants and agricultural workers (who formed 65 to 80 per cent. of the rural population of these regions). Entire towns held by the insurrectionists were turned into independent "republics," as the phrase went in the bourgeois press.

<sup>223</sup> Attached to the Central Committee, there was in St. Petersburg a "technical group" which made explosives and could turn out bombs at the rate of 150 per day. But this group failed to establish proper contact with the fighting squads and played no part in the December insurrection. As to rifles, the best were in the hands of the fighting squad of the railwaymen, who had bought them from the soldiers coming back from the Far East.

<sup>224</sup> After the dissolution of the Duma on 17th July, a mutiny broke out in the destroyer flotilla stationed at Sveaborg in Finland. The rebels captured almost the entire fortress and two of the fortified islands, arrested the officers and held at bay six infantry companies; the arrival of battleships alone obliged them to surrender on 20th July. Those who had not succeeded in crossing over to Sweden were executed. The mutiny of Kronstadt followed that of Sveaborg on 20th July; it began among the sailors and spread to the marines and the sappers, but did not affect the whole garrison; it was quickly and savagely suppressed.

<sup>225</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VII., part 2, pp. 77-96.

<sup>226</sup> Groups of ex-Cadets who started the weekly review *Bez Zaglavia* (*Without a Name*) and were similar to the group known in the west as "critical socialists." Among them were Kuskova and Prokopovitch.

<sup>227</sup> The idea of the general strike as a means of bringing about revolution was expressed in the First International by the Bakuninists. The Marxists, on the contrary, rejected it. When the anarchists from the Latin countries in 1892 and, later on, the syndicalists revived the idea, the congresses of the Second International (London, 1896; district Labour Congress of Tours, 1892; national congress of trade unions at Nantes, 1894; federal congress of Toulouse, 1897; "general strike is synonymous with revolution"; Amsterdam, 1904) condemned it again. Before 1900, Lenin char-

acterised the idea of a revolutionary general strike as absurd whenever he came across it. The events in Russia (1903-1905), however, obliged the Social-Democrats to re-examine the question. In June, 1905, a book by H. Roland-Holst on *The General Strike and Social Democracy*, appeared with a preface by Kautsky.

<sup>228</sup> The economic strikes of this period, especially those in the textile mills in Petersburg in 1896-1897, played a considerable part in awakening and organising the Labour movement. (See Vol. I of this series.)

<sup>229</sup> For the political, and not merely economic demonstrations of 1901-1902, see the references in the text and notes in Vol. I. of this series.

In 1902 the agrarian movement began to assume definite shape in the provinces of Kharkov and Poltava, and Lenin did not fail to draw attention to it, as can be seen from the same volume.

<sup>230</sup> The strike in Rostov in November, 1902, with its spontaneous extension and bloody encounters with the troops, can be considered as the beginning of the revolutionary period; in 1903, from July onwards, there were other mass strikes at Baku (150,000 workers), at Tiflis (15,000), at Batum, at Odessa (where the cry "Down with Autocracy!" was raised), and at Kiev. In the south, the number of participants was estimated at 250,000. For the 9th of January and for the phases later referred to, see earlier in this volume.

Here Lenin has in mind the *Potemkin* mutiny referred to above, Kronstadt (October 26th-28th, 1905), Sebastopol, which was much more serious, involving the sailors, the soldiers of the garrison and the dock workers; the Lieutenant Schmidt episode of November 11th and 12th, and lastly, Sveaborg and Kronstadt in July, 1906, after the dissolution of the first Duma.

The peasant movement, which spread almost throughout the whole of Russia, was accompanied by actual peasant insurrections with a momentary seizure of power in the Baltic provinces and in Caucasia.

<sup>231</sup> The *Black Hundreds* were composed of the most varied elements; hooligans, unemployed, shop-keepers and clerks, either fanatics or in the pay of reactionary organisations such as the *League of the Russian People*. Their

watchword was defence of the autocracy and the Russian nation, and they exploited anti-semitic prejudice extensively: hence the "pogroms" or sacking of the Jewish districts. Almost invariably the police, and in some cases the Government authorities supported the pillages and massacres. After the Kishinev pogrom (in Bessarabia, April 6th-7th, 1903), Lenin wrote in *Iskra*: "The reactionaries and the Government are now artificially and quite deliberately and in cold blood stirring up inter-racial and religious strife *in order to sidetrack the people from the path of social and political protest on which they have entered.* The Siedlce pogrom (Poland), took place on August 26th, 1906, and was one of the most notable (among many others) because of the part played by the agents of the Government. It was the subject of an interpellation in the Duma.

<sup>222</sup> The Bielostok pogrom (June 1st-3rd, 1906), on which Lenin wrote an article entitled *The Reaction is Beginning the Struggle by Armed Force*, was instigated by the authorities: pamphlets, printed and distributed through the efforts of the gendarmerie two weeks beforehand, incited to the murder of Jews and intellectuals, who were denounced as being responsible for all the revolutionary disturbances; the troops, far from establishing order, took part in the pillage. As one deputy expressed it, it was a veritable "military and police expedition" (100 killed and a large number of wounded).

<sup>223</sup> In Siberia, the suppression was conducted by General Miller Zakomelski, who ran his "punitive train" over the Trans-Siberian line, attacking chiefly railroad and telegraph workers, and making a special point of hanging or shooting Jews.

<sup>224</sup> This undoubtedly refers to the expropriation in 1905 in the little town of Kvirilly in the Caucasus by a group of Bolsheviks, the proceeds of which were used for the purchase of arms abroad.

<sup>225</sup> Towards the middle of 1906, three-fourths of the country was subject to martial law.

The murder of the Chief of Police of Siedlce by a bomb on August 8th had served as a pretext for the pogrom.

Between February 17th, 1905, and October 17th, 1906,

there were 542 executions and 1,449 sentences to penal servitude.

<sup>236</sup> For instance, Martov in his *History of Russian Social-Democracy*, writes: "After the dissolution of the Duma, as a result of the court martial regime, an epidemic of anarchism spread over Russia and infected the Party." He attributes this "to the presence in the ranks of the Party of numerous elements for whom a normal existence had become impossible after the December insurrections, because they were being hunted like beasts,"—for example deserters from the army, navy etc.

<sup>237</sup> The Stockholm Congress had created the conditions for the affiliation of the Lettish Social-Democratic Party to the Social-Democratic Party of Russia; the fusion had just been ratified by the Third Congress of the Lettish Party in August, 1905.

At the end of 1905, the Lettish Social-Democratic Party had nearly 20,000 members and in the spring of 1906, after the repression, 13,000 more. Its monthly organ, *Zihna* (*The Struggle*), had always sanctioned the use of armed force. As early as the summer of 1905, it declared: "We will not spare a single traitor hidden in our ranks. . . . If we shoot spies, police, Cossacks and noblemen, they have only themselves to blame." At the time of the "punitive expeditions," guerilla warfare was intensified: the underground revolutionists formed teams of "Brethren of the Woods," using terrorist methods. On July 18th, a district committee in Riga published a list of spies who were to be done away with; another list appeared at about the same time in the Tukhum organisation and in Livonia. The *Novoye Vremya* referred several times to these lists.

<sup>238</sup> Towards the middle of 1906, the number of unemployed in Odessa was estimated at 12,000, in Moscow 25,000, and in St. Petersburg 20,000. Unemployment was especially rife in the metal industry.

<sup>239</sup> The Polish Socialist Party (unlike the Social-Democratic Parties of Poland and Lithuania, which, after Stockholm, were amalgamated with the Social-Democratic Party of Russia), was first of all a nationalist party. Its right-wing fraction, late in 1905, addressed an open letter to the Central Committee demanding "the transformation of the Military Council of the party into a Ministry of War to

conduct a determined war for independence from Russia." In accordance with this principle, the Military Council, ignoring the instructions of the Central Committee and the Party Convention, plunged into heedless guerilla warfare against "the Russian invasion," even attacking soldiers, and killing even those among them who were active Party members. Polish Social-Democracy did not hesitate to condemn this absurd action.

<sup>240</sup> Bolshevik Social-Democrats are frequently charged with adopting a frivolous and biased attitude towards guerilla warfare. It will not be superfluous therefore to recall that when the resolution on guerilla operations was being discussed, the section of the Bolsheviks which defended these operations put forward the following conditions: "expropriation" of private property not to be permitted; "expropriation" of Government property not to be recommended, but permitted only on condition that it is carried out under the control of the Party and the proceeds employed for the needs of the revolution. Guerilla warfare in the form of terror is recommended against Governmental terrorists and active members of the Black Hundreds on condition that: (1) the temper of the masses is taken into consideration, (2) the state of the Labour movement in the given locality is taken into consideration, and (3) care is taken that the proletariat does not expend its forces uselessly. The only thing that distinguishes this draft from the resolution passed at a joint Congress is that the expropriation of Government property is not permitted in the latter.—N.L.

Not all the Bolsheviks agreed with Lenin on this point. At the London Convention, held a little later, many of them helped to defeat Lenin's resolution in favour of "confiscation" by voting with the Mensheviks.

<sup>241</sup> The question of a boycott does not come within the scope of this pamphlet. We will, however, mention that the boycott must not be discussed apart from concrete historical circumstances. The boycott of the Bulygin Duma was appropriate. The boycott of the Witte Duma was necessary and correct. Revolutionary Social-Democracy must be the first to adopt the path of resolute and direct struggle and the last to adopt more devious methods. The boycott of the Stolypin Duma is impossible in the old form and

would be incorrect after the experience of the first Duma.  
—N.L.

<sup>242</sup> The police almost immediately prohibited the Congress and the delegates were deported. The Congress was finally held in London.

<sup>243</sup> *Collected Works Russian Edition*, Vol. VII., pp. 366-370.

<sup>244</sup> With compensation to owners, as the Liberals demanded, or without compensation, as the peasants and revolutionists demanded.

<sup>245</sup> The Menshevik daily, which first appeared on April 10th, 1907, as successor to the *Russkaya Zhizn* (*Russian Life*) and the *Narodnaya Duma* (*Popular Thought*) which had been suppressed by the censor.

<sup>246</sup> Bolshevik daily in St. Petersburg, which on March 25th, 1907, succeeded *Novy Put* (*The New Way*) and *Istina* (*Reality*), which had been suppressed. Lenin contributed numerous articles to this paper while continuing to publish *Proletarii*, which was illegal and appeared abroad.

<sup>247</sup> While there was no right wing in the First Duma, there was one in the Second; it consisted of 122 deputies, among them the 32 Octobrists, former *Zemtsi* (county deputies) who had repented of their "radicalism."

<sup>248</sup> There were 34 Social Revolutionary, 100 Labourite and 14 Populist-Socialist deputies.

<sup>249</sup> "Safeguard the Duma," that is, not to furnish the Government with a pretext for dissolving it, was the watchword of the Cadets. Rumours of dissolution were current even before the Duma had assembled, and continued to circulate to the end.

<sup>250</sup> We totally reject this argument about "mandates." Who counts the number of revolutionary and opportunist instructions and mandates to deputies? Who does not know how many newspapers were suppressed for printing revolutionary instructions to deputies?—N.L.

<sup>251</sup> The Cadets decided not to raise a discussion on the declaration of the Government, which was read on March 6th, and to "maintain the silence of the grave." All the left-wing groups, with the exception of the Social-Democrats, supported this policy. In electing Golovin to the

Presidency of the Chamber, the Social-Democrats fell in line with the rest.

<sup>252</sup> *Collected Works* Russian Edition, Vol. VIII., pp. 448-456.

<sup>253</sup> After the law of August 6th was passed when the discussion opened on the subject of the future Duma (known as the Bulgin Duma).

<sup>254</sup> Later, at the Vyborg Conference, the advocates of the boycott stated in their resolution that "participation in the elections would be interpreted by the masses as an avowal that the revolution had come to an end, and that there was nothing left but submission to long years of weary toil." Lenin throughout the whole article emphasises that revolution is possible even through the channel of constitutional monarchy.

<sup>255</sup> In contrast with the preceding period, when there was hesitation between the two paths.

<sup>256</sup> Shortly before this Lenin wrote: There is not a historian to-day who does not divide the history of the Russian revolution, from 1905 to the autumn of 1907, into two periods; the period of "anti-constitutional" ascent, if it can be so expressed, and the period of "constitutional" descent, i.e. the period in which the people conquer and exercise their liberty without the controlling influence of constitutionalism (monarchical), and the period in which this liberty is suppressed and trampled upon by a monarchical "constitution."

<sup>257</sup> This was demonstrated in Part II. of the article: "The boycott is employed not for the purpose of combatting an institution on its own ground, but to prevent its coming into existence. Every institution necessarily emanates from the existing State. The boycott, then, is a weapon which aims to overthrow this State, or at least, if the attacking forces are insufficient, to weaken it to such an extent that it cannot create the proposed institution. To be successful, the boycott demands a direct struggle against the State, i.e. insurrection."

<sup>258</sup> Lenin had in a previous passage recalled that in 1904, repressions, instead of weakening the movement, extended it; after January 9th there was a gigantic wave of strikes, the Lodz barricades, and the *Potemkin* mutiny. In the press, at meetings, in the schools and universities, every-

where, not only revolutionaries but even the general public openly acted in defiance of the law, for the State was appreciably weakened, the reins were slipping from its feeble hands. . . . The watchwords of the revolutionists not only met with full response from the people, but actually failed to keep up with events. The 9th of January, the mass strikes which followed, and the *Potemkin* mutiny—all preceded the direct appeals of the revolutionists. In 1905 not a single appeal issued by the revolutionists was left unheeded by the masses.

<sup>259</sup> In spite of the official decision of the party to boycott the First Duma, numerous Social-Democratic workers took part in the nomination of delegates and electors.

<sup>260</sup> After the dissolution of the First Duma, the Social-Democratic fraction took part in the Vyborg Conference, where it signed the Cadet Manifesto calling for a refusal to pay taxes, and jointly with the Labour Groups drafted the appeals to the peasants and soldiers. None of these activities, not even an appeal for a general strike issued by the Central Committee, had any effect.

<sup>261</sup> In a circular addressed to the organisations, the Central Committee wrote that it was necessary to take advantage of events to develop the revolutionary energy of the proletariat, which should be utilised according to local conditions, in campaigns, meetings, strikes, or direct encounters with the troops.

<sup>262</sup> In the letter to Kugelmann, of March 3rd, 1869, Marx points to a very interesting movement in France: "The Parisians are studying their revolutionary past with a view to preparing themselves for the new revolutionary activity which is imminent. First, the overthrow of the Empire, then the December *coup d'état*. All that had been completely forgotten. In Germany as well the reaction has succeeded in wiping out completely the memory of 1848 to 1849." Lenin was thoroughly familiar with the *Letters to Kugelmann*, for he had just written (February, 1907) a preface to the Russian edition of this correspondence.

<sup>263</sup> A. Büchner's book, *Das tolle Jahr*, published in 1900, bore the sub-title, *By One Who Is Now Sane*. The expression "Mad Year" in reference to 1848 is often used by German historians.

<sup>264</sup> Kizevetter, a noted Cadet, publicist and Professor of History at the University of Moscow, Deputy in the Second Duma. He presided over the commission appointed by the Duma on June 1st, 1907, to discuss the Government's demand for the arrest of the Social-Democratic Deputies.

<sup>265</sup> Kamyshevsky, Public Prosecutor in St. Petersburg, who at the session of the Duma on June 1st read the report of the investigation into the relations between the Social-Democratic fraction "and the criminal organisation called the Russian Social-Democratic Party."

<sup>266</sup> The First Duma, convened after the suppression of the Moscow insurrection by General Dubassov, and the Second Duma, convened under the Stolypin Ministry.

<sup>267</sup> The new electoral law, favouring the big landholders guaranteed a Duma based on the October Manifesto.

<sup>268</sup> Throughout the Second Duma the Cadets avowed the strictest respect for the "Constitution." In the First Duma, when the pogroms were under discussion, their spokesman Roditchiev said that the Ministry alone was responsible, and that it would be insolence to hold the monarch responsible for the massacres.

<sup>269</sup> The Address was drafted after the battle of Sedan by Marx and Engels in the name of the General Council of the International. It contained the following passage: "The French workers must fulfil their duty as citizens, but they must not allow themselves to be dominated by the national memories of 1792. . . . They need not ignore the past, but they have to build the future."

<sup>270</sup> This is the phrase applied to the period immediately following the promulgation of the Manifesto of October 17th, 1905.

<sup>271</sup> The Duma alone was empowered to amend the electoral law, so, although the dissolution was constitutional, the promulgation of a new electoral law by *ukase* of the Tsar could legally be termed a *coup d'état*.

<sup>272</sup> See *Proletarii* (Geneva) 1905, an article on the boycott of the Bulygin Duma, in which we point out that we do not forswear ever using the Duma, but that at that time we were solving quite another problem, namely, the problem of the struggle for the direct revolutionary path. See also *Proletarii* (Russian), 1906, No. 1, the article on the boycott

in which the modest results that can be expected from Duma work are emphasised.—N. L.

(Both these articles are included in this volume.—Ed.)

<sup>273</sup> The term applied to the tendency which justified the use of armed force, guerrilla warfare, terrorism, etc., in all cases.

<sup>274</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XI., Part 1, pp. 250-260.

<sup>275</sup> In the course of the discussion in the parliamentary group it was stated that in St. Petersburg there were 40,000 members of religious sects "including a mass of workers," and that a new sect had been founded which former members of the Social-Democratic Committee of St. Petersburg had joined.

<sup>276</sup> Holbach, Lamettrie, Helvetius, Diderot and the Encyclopædistes generally. Engels recommended their works, "which set a high standard in matter and are unequalled in form." The materialism of these authors, however, was still mechanical and "metaphysical" in that it considered things as lifeless entities, disregarding their vital internal processes, and was thus unable to explain their inherent character or the relationship existing between them. The two great principles of Hegelian dialectical thought state, on the contrary, that every phenomenon in the course of its evolution destroys itself and becomes transformed into its opposite; and that the progressive quantitative change in the evolution of phenomena is finally transformed into qualitative change. Marx and Engels combined the materialism of the eighteenth century with the dialectics of Hegel, whence their "dialectical materialism."

<sup>277</sup> Feuerbach, in his *Essence of Christianity* (1841), asserted that beyond nature and man there is nothing, the superior beings created by our imagination are only the fantastic reflections of our own being. This book greatly influenced Marx, who considered Feuerbach's philosophy as being midway between Hegel's philosophy and his own.

<sup>278</sup> About 1855, E. Dühring, a celebrated professor at the University of Berlin, announced his conversion to socialism, and immediately published a work of three volumes, in which he developed a complete philosophy, directed not only against capitalism and against State socialism, but also against the doctrines of Marx and Lassalle, denying that

the latter had any scientific value whatsoever. Engels replied to this work in a series of articles in *Vorwärts* in 1877-1878, later collected and published in a separate volume entitled *Herr Dühring Overthrows Science* (English edition, edited by Charles H. Kerr, entitled *Landmarks of Scientific Socialism*.) As this work contains a concise résumé of the doctrine of scientific socialism, it soon became famous under the title of *Anti-Dühring*. In the preface to the second edition Engels declares that since the ideas set forth are in reality the ideas of Marx, he "gave him the whole manuscript to read before it was printed."

<sup>279</sup> In 1886 Engels published a book called *Louis Feuerbach and the End of German Classical Philosophy* (translated into Russian by Plekhanov, and into French by Paul and Laura Lafargue). In it he exposes the vestiges of idealist philosophy in Feuerbach's work, especially in relation to religion and ethics. "He does not want to abolish religion, he only wants to complete it. Philosophy itself is resolved into religion." See the whole of Chapter III of this book.

<sup>280</sup> After withdrawing from the International, the Blanquist Communards who had emigrated to London formed the group known as "The Revolutionary Commune," and in 1872 published a manifesto entitled: *To the Supporters of the Commune!* in which they appealed to all who called themselves "atheists, communists or revolutionists," to resume the struggle and revive the revolutionary party. The manifesto stated that "the idea of a being outside of and ruling the universe" is the cause of "all forms of moral and social slavery: religion, despotism, property and classes, under which humanity is suffering and bleeding." And consequently "in the Commune there is no place for the priest; every demonstration, every organisation of a religious nature must be prohibited." In 1874 Engels published an article in the *Volkstaat* attacking this naive idea of "abolishing God by decree," in order to appear more radical than everyone else. "The best service which can be rendered to religion to-day," he says, "is to make atheism compulsory and to excel Bismarck's laws against the church by prohibiting religion altogether."

<sup>281</sup> See *Anti-Dühring*, Part III, Chapter V: "The State, the Family and Education."

<sup>282</sup> Particularly the Catholic Centre Party, which in the Reichstag elections of 1871 polled 18 per cent. of the votes, and in 1874 polled 28 per cent.—with the *Kulturkampf* in full swing—thus becoming the strongest party (until 1890).

<sup>283</sup> One of the principal acts of the *Kulturkampf* was the law expelling the Jesuits from Germany (1872). This law was partly repealed in 1894.

<sup>284</sup> "The Social-Democratic Party of Germany demands first of all. . . (6) that religion be declared a private matter. . . that ecclesiastic and religious communities be considered as private associations enjoying complete independence in the management of their internal affairs." (Erfurt Programme, II, 1.) This programme, adopted in place of the Gotha programme, was drawn up by Karl Kautsky; it served as a model for most of the socialist parties.

<sup>285</sup> The Dutch Marxists Pannekoek and Gorter asserted that the party of the workers should be neutral in regard to religion, which would naturally disappear with social and scientific progress.

<sup>286</sup> i.e., fear in the face of the forces of nature—an explanation of religion borrowed from the Latin poet Lucretius and often repeated by the Encyclopædists. Here Lenin gives it another interpretation, viz., fear in face of the anarchical forces of capitalist society.

<sup>287</sup> In Russia the Church was under State control.

<sup>288</sup> *Vekhi*: the title of a volume of essays written by a number of Cadet writers, several editions of which appeared in a very short time. In a critical review of the book Lenin showed that it clearly expressed the ideas then prevailing in the Cadet Party, in spite of the repudiation published in many papers. The authors, considering the Russian revolution to be the work of a few intellectuals and not of the people, adopted the phraseology of the worst reactionaries, the Black Hundreds. In philosophy also, against "intellectual" materialism and atheism they set up faith and mysticism, in the spirit of Dostoevsky and Vladimir Soloviev.

<sup>289</sup> Most was a Social-Democrat and member of the Reichstag before he became an Anarchist. He succumbed to Dühring's idea of opposition to all doctrines of authority, and of the importance accorded to the trade unions. It was

under his influence that the radical tendency of the Social-Democratic Party developed in Austria-Hungary, where it was compromised in 1882-84 by the terrorist acts of a few Anarchists. Most was prosecuted for blasphemy.

<sup>290</sup> By way of illustration we can quote the figures of the Moscow provincial organisation (covering the province of Moscow, exclusive of the city). In a district with about 300,000 industrial workers there were, in 1905-06, 2,000 Social-Democrats; in 1909, 260; in 1910 about 150. In order to appreciate the result of the transfer abroad of the leading organs of the Party, let us take, for example, the small number of copies of *Proletarii* which reached Russia: No. 39, 13 copies; Nos. 41, 42 and 43, 62 copies; No. 44, 112 copies; No. 46, 436 copies; Nos. 47 and 48, 1,131 copies.

<sup>291</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XI., Part I., pp. 272-279.

<sup>292</sup> In June, 1909, a conference of the Editorial Staff and contributors of the *Proletariu* was held in Lenin's apartment in Paris, those present being Lenin, Zinoviev, Kameniev, Bogdanov, three representatives from St. Petersburg, Moscow and the Urals, and five Bolshevik members of the Central Committee. Resolutions were adopted which determined the tactics of the Bolsheviks up to the conference of 1912. These resolutions condemned Otzovism, Ultimatism and the "God-creators." At this conference A. Bogdanov and another representative of the opposition declared that the decisions were unconstitutional, that their adoption was tantamount to declaring a split in the fraction, and that they would not put them into practice. Bogdanov added that he would not submit to them. Lenin declared that this incident marked the formal separation of Bogdanov from the Bolshevik fraction, but not from the Party, for "the fraction is not a party. A party can include a wide range of opinions, the extremes of which may even be diametrically opposite to each other." The headquarters of the Bogdanov group was the propagandists' school, which he, Lunacharsky, Gorki and their friends established at Capri without the sanction of the Central Committee.

<sup>293</sup> The Conference of the Social-Democratic Party, which was held in Paris in December, 1908, had, against the votes of the Mensheviks and the Bolshevik opposition, passed the

resolutions introduced by the Lenin group, among which was a long resolution declaring that a change had taken place in the nature and policy of the Government, that a new counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie had arisen, and, finally, that the bulk of the population had acquired revolutionary experience, and that consequently it was necessary to retain the old slogans and strengthen the underground Party.

<sup>294</sup> In the Menshevik organ, *The Voice of Social-Democracy*, edited abroad, Martov described the resolutions of December, 1908, as reactionary, and as dragging the movement back "to the historically obsolete form of centralised and exclusive conspiratorial organisation."

<sup>295</sup> By a resolution introduced at the Party Conference, and also by the publication in Moscow of a pamphlet in which it was maintained that the Party was a harmful anachronism. But as early as the autumn of 1908 a "group of 11 to 14 members" was formed among the Moscow Mensheviks, who thought that "any attempt to restore the old forms of organisation was reactionary and utopian."

<sup>296</sup> At the December Conference the representatives of the Bund voted for the resolution of the orthodox Bolsheviks.

<sup>297</sup> No. 39 of the *Proletariu* (November 13th, 1908) contained a letter from a Moscow Otzovist worker and an article by Lenin in reply; No. 42 (February 12th, 1909) contained an article by Zinoviev on the Paris Conference; the supplement to No. 44 (April 4th, 1909) contained an article by Lenin analysing and criticising the resolution of the St. Petersburg Otzovists.

<sup>298</sup> Lenin throughout this discussion, makes a distinction between out-and-out Otzovists like Stanislas Volski, one of the leading Social-Democrats in Moscow, and those who, like Bogdanov, while formally repudiating the Otzovists, actually supported them in one way or another. He showed that these latter were at heart hypocritical Otzovists.

<sup>299</sup> Cherevanin, the Menshevik, had in 1907 published in Moscow a book entitled *The Proletariat in the Revolution*, which because of its revisionist tendencies aroused the protest of the Dutch Marxist, H. Roland-Holst, who wrote

the preface to the German translation. Then the Menshevik organ, *Gолос Социал-Демократии* (*Voice of Social Democracy*, published at Geneva since February, 1908), disavowed the author in a note published in *Vorwärts*. But this repudiation was neither reprinted nor explained in Russia. In view of the refusal of the Menshevik leaders to condemn the liquidators openly, Plekhanov, who was a member of the staff of the *Gолос Социал-Демократии*, ceased to contribute to it in December, 1908, and formally resigned in May, 1909.

<sup>300</sup> In 1908 the Mensheviks of Russia undertook the publication of a symposium in five volumes on *The Social Movement in Russia at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. Plekhanov consented to join the Board of Editors with Martov, Maslov and Potressov. But when Potressov read his article on *The Evolution of Social and Political Thought in the Pre-revolutionary Period* for the first volume, Plekhanov explained, as he himself relates: "But that is just what we used to call legal Marxism!" And soon perceiving its great harmfulness he resigned from the Board of Editors (summer, 1908).

<sup>301</sup> In 1908 the Mensheviks ceased to take part in the work of the Central Committee that was elected at the London Congress on the pretext that it was "merely a screen for the Bolshevik centre," that it systematically persecuted the parliamentary group, that it disrupted the legal unions etc.

<sup>302</sup> Dan and Axelrod participated in the conference of December, 1908, as delegates of the Transcaucasian Committee headed by Jordania. The Caucasus was the only district in Russia where illegal Menshevik organisations existed.

<sup>303</sup> The effective forces of the Social-Democratic Party had suddenly swelled considerably in 1905-06.

<sup>304</sup> Fifty-two per cent. of the Menshevik delegates to the London Convention in 1907 were intellectuals as against 6 per cent. of the Bolshevik delegates.

<sup>305</sup> A reference to a pamphlet written by Martov in 1903, entitled *Once More in the Minority*.

<sup>306</sup> An alliance was to be concluded between the Mensheviks of the Party and the Bolsheviks. A meeting of the

Central Committee was to be held for the purpose of re-establishing unity.

The conference of the *Proletarii* had declared: "In the difficult period through which we are now passing it would be a crime on our part to refrain from holding out our hand to the Party men of the other fractions who are defending Marxism, defending the Party idea against the liquidators." An alliance was proposed with Plekhanov and his group against the liquidators on the one hand and the Otzovists on the other. The latter included these advances to Plekhanov in their complaints against the "Leninists."

<sup>307</sup> In this article Lenin shows that the differentiation between true socialists and temporary comrades who have been drawn to the proletariat by the glamour of slogans or the democratic aims which the proletariat and the Cadets have in common, exists among the Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks, but with much less demoralisation and waste of energy.

<sup>308</sup> This refers to Bogdanov's protest against the decision of the conference of June, 1909.

<sup>309</sup> There were in fact Bolsheviks who, while not in agreement with the Otzovists or the Ultimatists, felt that it was useless to fight them, and consequently took a neutral stand between them and the "orthodox" Bolsheviks. Such was Voronin, a worker and one of the founders of the Capri school, who later joined the Lenin group. Other "unattached" Social-Democrats, rather more Menshevik than Bolshevik, rallied at the time around the paper *Pravda*, which had been edited by Trotsky at Vienna since August, 1908, and which, because of its popular form, was very successful among the workers in Russia.

<sup>310</sup> Here Lenin foresees the formation of the Vperiod group (in December, 1909), including Otzovists, Ultimatists and "God-creators."

<sup>311</sup> In the literature current at the time to "speak French" meant to imitate the French Revolution, to act in a revolutionary way, while to "speak German" meant to use the methods adopted by German Social-Democracy under the regime of Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Laws, namely, to maintain the illegal party and its leading role, while utilising parliament, the trade unions and legal methods.

<sup>312</sup> The Central Committee elected at the Stockholm Congress.

<sup>313</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. II., Part I., pp. 300-309.

<sup>314</sup> Lenin always accused the Otzovists of repeating the old Bolshevik formulae without understanding them, instead of thinking independently for themselves.

<sup>315</sup> Uneasy over the progress of the Labour movement, Bismarck passed an emergency law in 1878, directed especially "against the destructive conspiracies of Social-Democracy," prohibiting all associations, meetings and publications "aiming at the overthrow of the social order," or "threatening to disturb the harmony between the classes." In spite of severe persecution, the Social-Democratic Party was able to maintain its influence and at each successive election obtained a larger number of votes and a larger number of seats in the Reichstag than in the previous election. Thus in 1878, 437,000 votes and nine deputies; in 1884, 550,000 votes and 24 seats; in 1890, 1,427,000 votes and 35 seats; in 1907, 3,259,029 votes and 43 seats. Among the deputies were men like Bebel and W. Liebknecht.

<sup>316</sup> At the London Conference in 1907 a resolution sanctioning "confiscation" of public funds was rejected by the votes not only of the Mensheviks, but also of some of the Bolsheviks. Thereafter, expropriations not only increased but degenerated more and more into isolated acts of banditry for personal gain or out of bravado. In 1909, the Bolsheviks ordered the dissolution of all the fighting groups, and expelled the "expropriators" from the Party. The Otzovists did not approve this decision.

<sup>317</sup> At this time the *Revolutionary Thought*, and even the *Labour Standard*, Social Revolutionary organs, preached the use of non-parliamentary methods and "the direct action of a minority taking the initiative."

<sup>318</sup> The resolution of the All-Russian Conference of 1908 described the situation thus: "The old feudal aristocracy is in a state of decay, and is taking another step towards its transformation into a bourgeois monarchy cloaking absolutism in pseudo-constitutional forms. The *coup d'état* of June 3rd and the Third Duma consecrated the alliance of Tsarism with the Black Hundred landowners and the big commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. Forced de-

finitely to follow the road of capitalism, and seeking a way to preserve the power and revenues of the feudal land-owners, the autocracy vacillates between them and the capitalists. Taking advantage of the minor differences between these two classes to strengthen its own position, and in alliance with them, the autocracy is conducting a savage counter-revolutionary struggle against the socialist proletariat and the democratic peasants."

<sup>311</sup> The liquidators nevertheless continued to publish this paper.

<sup>312</sup> *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. XI., pp. 13-22.

<sup>313</sup> To justify their opposition to the Bolshevik centre, which they claimed had degenerated, the Otzovists claimed to be acting in the same way as the Bolsheviks in 1904 when they revolted against the Central Committee of that time, which was degenerating into Menshevism. To lend colour to this plea they called their group by the name of the paper which Lenin published in 1904—*Vperiod*.

<sup>314</sup> See the introduction to *Liquidating the Liquidators*.

<sup>315</sup> That is to say Stolypin's policy of developing a class of well-to-do peasant proprietors. The *ukase* of November 9th, 1906, permitted any member of a rural commune who desired to do so, to separate from it, and establish himself as an independent farmer on his own holding.

<sup>316</sup> In February, 1908, Lenin wrote: "The fate of the bourgeois revolution in Russia—not only the present revolution, but possible future democratic revolutions—depends chiefly upon the success or failure of this policy."

<sup>317</sup> Throughout the controversy with the Otzovists, Lenin repeatedly stated that the first two Dumas were not serious institutions; they were "constitutional illusions." The Third Duma and the constitution of June 3rd, however, were extremely real and marked the establishment of a new regime.

<sup>318</sup> Lenin's article in No. 44 of *Proletarii* criticising the Otzovist resolution passed in St. Petersburg was entitled, *A Caricature of Bolshevism*.

<sup>319</sup> Mach, a physicist and professor of philosophy at Vienna, contended that science should be simply a description of facts and of the relations existing between them: matter itself was only a symbol without reality, a certain grouping of sensations, like the mind. Machism therefore

is a sort of idealist empiricism; nevertheless, certain Bolsheviks like Bogdanov believed that they could reconcile this theory with historical materialism. The works of Mach were translated into Russian in 1907-09. Lenin criticises them in his *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*.

<sup>222</sup> Maxim Gorki at that time had published his principal works. For many years he had been a member of the Social-Democratic Party, to which, moreover, he had given considerable financial aid. Lenin had a sincere affection for him, as is proved by the correspondence between the two; but when in 1908 Gorki took up the cause of the "God-creators" Lenin did not hesitate to oppose him. On this occasion, in November, 1909, several bourgeois papers in France, Germany and Russia spread the sensational news that Gorki had been expelled from the Social-Democratic Party. *Proletarii*, and later, Lenin himself, denied this false report.

